

يا ايها الذين آمنوا اتقوا الله وابتغوا اليه الوسيلة
وجاهدوا في سبيله لعلكم تفلحون

A PRESENT TO KINGS

BEING THE TRANSLATION OF

TUHFAT=UL=MULUK

A LETTER FROM

HAZRAT MIRZA BASHIR-UD-DIN MAHMUD AHMAD,

Second Successor of the Promised Messiah,

TO

HIS HIGHNESS THE NIZAM OF HYDERABAD.

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

A Present to Kings.

(Being the translation of Tuhfatul Muluk, a letter from the Khalifatul Maseeh II to His Highness the Nizam).*

**In the name of God the Beneficent, the Merciful.
We praise Him and invoke His blessings
upon His Prophet.**

YOUR HIGHNESS,

Peace be on you and the mercy of God and His favours.

Before entering upon the main subject of the present letter, I consider it necessary to explain that by reason of my being bred and brought up amidst surroundings, which, through the Grace of God, have been permeated with Islamic manners and customs, I am by nature averse to those conventionalities of language which the passage of time has made current among the Mussalmans of India and Persia. So, if Your Highness should happen to miss in this letter such terms of address as are commonly used by people when writing to royal personages or to rulers of states, I should beg to be excused. Their absence is not due to any lack of respect but to Islamic simplicity. For, as a matter of fact, agreeably to the dictates of the Holy Quran, I honour with my heart and soul all those whom God has vested with honour and I consider such people as pervert whose minds are barren of respect for those to whom God has granted any kind of rank. Such conduct is not only an insult to the persons,

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but an affront to the Power who raised them to their stations. In the Holy Quran God commands even such a puissant prophet as Moses and his brother Aaron—peace be on them—to approach the wicked king Pharaoh, but He admonishes them to speak to him not harshly or disrespectfully but in kind words. How then is it possible that I should fail to show respect to a ruler who has the honour of being among the servants of my master and beloved, the Holy Prophet—peace and blessings be upon him. If, therefore, I do abandon the current conventionalities, this is not due to any want of respect, but because my Islamic training compels me to avoid such useless conventionalities. Otherwise I consider it incumbent upon me to show respect even to rulers of alien creeds.

I also consider it necessary to add here a few words by way of self-introduction. I belong to a respectable family of the Punjab and am known as Mirza Basheer-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad. My father Mirza Gulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, was divinely appointed for the guidance of the world and was the leader of the Ahmadi community, some of the members of which have their homes in Your Highness's territories. At the present time, God has, out of His sheer grace, appointed me to be the leader of this community and to be their second *khalifa*. As the community is not quite like the masses at large, it happened that after the death of the Promised Messiah, the person who was, through God's grace, appointed to be his first *khalifa*, was my revered Master, Moulvi Nur-ud-Din Sahib, who was the foremost member of the community in goodness, learning and piety. After his death God has appointed this humble servant to the charge of the community, and I am not aware to which family God may choose to transfer this office after me.

After these words of self-introduction, I deem it necessary to state that the idea of the present epistle had its origin in a dream. And since it is among the duties of a believer to give effect to dreams, I thought it proper that the command of God to convey to Your Highness the message of truth, which I received in the world of dream, should be given effect to in the

world of reality. This epistle, which out of regard for Your Highness's exalted rank, and for the benefit of the public at large, has been printed before transmission to Your Highness, is not deemed a proper place to relate the dream. So much however may be said, that I saw that in an elaborate discourse, I was explaining to Your Highness all about this movement. And what I spoke to Your Highness in my dream, a portion of the same, such as I happened to recollect, together with some additions, I now beg to submit to Your Highness in the form of this epistle. May God make it productive of good results and may He make Your Highness the means of guidance for a host of other people. Amen, Great God, Amen!

Your Highness is well aware that the condition in which Islam finds itself in the world to-day is without a parallel in any previous age. And when we compare its present condition with that of its early days, the vast gulf of difference is sure to make us shudder. That was a time when the condition of Islam was the humblest possible. The Holy Prophet was all alone preaching to people the truth of the new faith. There was no *Moulvi* to assist him, nor an *alem* nor any *waiz*. There was no kingdom to uphold the faith, nor any army nor any soldier to defend the faith against the attack of foes. It was the blessed personality of His Holy Prophet alone that in spite of innumerable difficulties and dangers, in a place like Mecca (where the inhabitants had their single means of livelihood in service at the idol-temples and were held in esteem in the whole of Arabia for being the priests of the idols) was employed night and day in the uprooting of polytheism. A few well disposed and good-natured people had listened to his pure teachings and believed in his truth, but the mass of hard-hearted and evil-disposed people had set themselves upon effecting his ruin and were seeking all possible means to oppose and destroy his faith. At length his followers had to fly from their homes, and he himself had to remove to Medina. The new city proved for him a source of greater difficulties and his greatness and constancy had opportunities to display their full perfection. The infidels of Mecca

continued their old animosity ; in addition three new enemies, the Jews, the Christians and the Hypocrites now rose to oppose him.

To-day, the Mussalmans are to be found in every corner of the earth and Islam claims its followers among all ranks of people. And though much of the former glory and power have been lost, there are still left a few ruling states which yet profess the faith. But withal it is apparent that the hearts of Mussalmans at large are fast sinking at the thought of the future of Islam. There are thousands, nay millions of Muslims who, at the sight of the power of Europe and its daily rising tide, have already come to the conclusion that for Islam to continue in its career of Saviour of Nations, nay even to maintain its position is now a thing outside the range of possibility. Nay, many a foolish one has gone so far as to predict that within a hundred years Islam will be obliterated from the face of the earth. As a matter of fact, the way in which at the present time Islam is being assailed from all sides, and every religion is treating Islam as the one common object of its onslaught, is sufficient to shake the heart of every shallow observer. And this is why the educated section of the community, who are acquainted with the condition of the times, are in a state of utter despair, and consider it but a bootless toil to take any measure or to make any endeavour for the regeneration of Islam. Such is the condition of the generality of Muslims of the present age, when in spite of there being myriads of them, they have reached the state of such utter despair. In contrast to this we see the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be on him) in his single person facing a whole world in opposition, at the same time full of the firmest confidence that his will be the victory against the whole world, that keys to the treasures of the Caesars and the Kesaras shall come into his hands, that Islam will spread to the farthest corners of the earth, that no power on earth shall be able to stay its march, and that whoever will oppose it or thwart its progress shall be pulled up and cast away root and branch. The Quran too, in several of its verses, makes the same prophecy,

for instance *يا غلبين انا ورسلي* "Of sure victory will belong to Me and to My prophets, etc."

And actually it so happened. Within a short space of time Islam spread to the corners of the earth, and inspite of the united efforts of all nations and religions there was no difference in the progress of Islam, which brought all the rival religions under its victorious sway.

To what wonderful heights did they to whom the bare sod had served as their couch of rest and mother earth had served as their nightly bed, who went without food for seven meals at a stretch, attain by virtue of following the Holy Quran and of the association of the Holy Prophet. Some attained the rank of kings, others became the governors of provinces, while others became the commanders of victorious armies. Their progress does not appear to have been the result of any exercise of the human brain, rather to one who considers the thing with true insight it would plainly appear that the cause of the progress lay in heavenly succour and assistance, and not in earthly measures. The world wanted not to let Islam grow, but God wanted that it should grow.

مكروا ومكروا لله والله خيرا لما كرين

"They took their measures and God took His measures and God is the best disposer of measures." Men sought a thousand means to put an end to the life of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings on him) and to eradicate his faith which was showing such uncommon progress, but

وجعل كلمة الذين كفروا اسفلى - وكلمة الله هي الاعلى

"The words of the infidels proved vain and the Word of God remained supreme."

What could human envy and jealousy avail against the faith established by God? Islam was a rock which broke every thing on which it fell and shattered everything which fell upon it. The servants of Islam became the Masters of the Earth, the heroes of Islam became the beloved of the world, the victories of Islam made millions of men their friends and

devotees. No body who attached himself to Islam tasted the fruit of disappointment, rather whoever touched its skirts met always with victory and success and was secure from loss and regret. Islam rehabilitated deserted homes and made the savage superior to the most civilised nations of the earth. It was an antidote of which whoever tasted was made immune from the diseases of scepticism, doubt and misgivings. It was a philosopher's stone, and whatever came into its contact was changed into gold, or rather became itself an alchemy a touch of which transmuted hearts hard like iron into pure gold. In short, there was no one who was any the worse for Islam. On the contrary it brought joy and success to all homes and there was not one who could say that he sacrificed some thing for Islam and remained so much the loser. Nations derived blessings from it and countries attained greatness through it.

Hundreds, nay thousands of religions there were which flourished before the advent of Islam. But with the appearance of this perfect religion the false creeds lost their charm and paled as do the stars on the rising of the sun or an old country taper besides a modern electric lamp. Neither such of the systems as by means of philosophy and science had sought to hold the world in their sway could prove a match for Islam, which overcame them by its simplicity, nor could those creeds prevail which by their fine allegories and exquisite parables had puzzled the human mind, nor those which flourished in the world under the protection of mighty empires. Neither did any better success attend those cults which had opened the door to every comfort and enjoyment and taught doctrines of epicureanism. Every kind of temptation and display and license and gloss proved unavailing in the conflict with the grand simplicity of the Islamic faith, and the latter remained the victor over the world. The victory was both physical and moral. On the one hand non-Islamic governments were supplanted by Islamic governments, and on the other millions of people abandoned their old creeds to take shelter under the faith of Islam. Whoever saw the Muslims had perforce to admit the truth of Islam.

Indeed so high was the respect that Islam commanded, that even in the last days of its glory, Hindu chiefs did willingly give their daughters in marriage to Muslim rulers, although as a matter of fact, the orthodox Hindu creed far from approving of such union does not permit a Hindu even to touch a Mussalman. At the present time religion has not the same hold upon people as was the case during the Mogul rule, and the Hindu chiefs have now less of power than what they enjoyed in those days—because then they were all but independent and exercised powers far in excess of those enjoyed by the present day Rajas. Still there will now be found no Hindu Raja who professing his own faith will consent to give his daughter in marriage to a European. The fact that the Rajas willingly gave their daughters in marriage to the Mogul kings is therefore a clear evidence of the singular nature of the influence wielded by the Mussalmans and the unique attraction exercised by them. The life of Akbar is an illustration in point.

In contrast to this what is the condition of Islam to-day? Country after country is passing out of the hands of the Mussalmans. Nay, rather, they have already lost them all and one by one all the kingdoms have been snatched away from them. It is true, kingdoms and nations do, in the nature of things, come to an end and no one familiar with history finds any reason for surprise in their ruin. For just as the individual is subject to death, so also the life of kingdoms and nations can not help being affected by the passage of time. The nation, that to-day holds the rule, does tomorrow lead a life of dishonour and dependency. Thus, it is a sign of ignorance to grieve over the fall of any nation. But the case becomes peculiarly significant when we find a number of kingdoms belonging to different peoples and situated in different parts of the world, but all professing one common faith, following one another in ruin in such quick succession. It is possible that the different dependencies of one empire may descend the steps of decline at one and the same time, because it often happens that there is a similarity in the condition of the different parts of one empire. But when kingdoms situated so wide apart as Algeria, Morocco, Tripoly, Egypt, India, Persia, Afghanistan, Turkistan,

the Phillipines, the Soudan, Abyssinia, established at diverse times and flourishing under the auspices of different nations all come to an end almost simultaneously and the rule is everywhere transferred from Muslim to non-Muslim hands, the events prove that the fall has a special significance and is not the result of occurrences that happen every day. Nor can the cause be attributed to human machinations. For the latter can hardly be supposed to affect simultaneously such diverse countries and kingdoms belonging to different nations and following different principles of government. If, however, any body should contest that the fall was due to material causes alone and there was no secret force working behind it, then he would necessarily have to deny, what is now universally accepted, that there was something extraordinary in the rise of Islam or that there was something singular in the progress of its early days. In fact this is what is maintained by the enemies of Islam, that there was nothing of the nature of miraculous about its rise. It was, they say, only an ordinary progress, and they mention several causes which led to it. They argue that the real cause lay in the fact, that the Arabs, by their long life of freedom, had acquired the capacity to conquer the ruling nations of the time, who had reached a state of exhaustion by having long spent up their stock of mental and physical energies, that the prophecy of the conquest of the empires and treasures of the Caesars and the Kesras made by the Holy Prophet was the mere result of his observation of the growing power of the Arabs and of his perception of the signs of the approaching dissolution of the two empires. Else, they say, there was nothing out of the common in the prophecy. Even if Islam had not come into existence the two empires would have come to their ruin ; and if the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) had not formed the Arabs into a nation under the banner of a religion, still they were sure to make a rise under some other leader. There is, however, no Mussalman who would accept such a view of the case. It is a common belief and creed with them that there was something out of the common in the rise of Islam, and that the rise happened under conditions under which it was impossible for any other nation to

rise. They believe that it was the hand of God that raised Islam and that the Power which brought about its progress was no other than the Author of the Universe. It is this view that is also corroborated by the facts of history. How, otherwise, is it possible that a man, who was placed under such circumstances when even his own people surrounded him from all sides and his companions found it hard to go out to attend to their most urgent necessities, and, not to speak of strangers, even the hypocrites who were mortally afraid of the Mussalmans, began to taunt them about their claims, seeing that they had not even a place to attend to their necessities, should still loudly and confidently declare that the keys of the treasures of Caesars and the Kesras were given into his hands, and that their empires and their palaces should be ruled over by his followers and his servants.

Thus, as, on the one hand, it will be ignoring the facts of history to attribute the rise of Islam to ordinary causes and circumstances, so on the other hand it will be unfair to ascribe its downfall to the usual causes of decay. That a number of different kingdoms ruled by different nations but all professing one common creed should meet with ruin within such a brief space of time is certainly very significant and to anyone possessing insight clearly points to the fact that there must be some special reason underlying the phenomenon. And what can the reason be save that, as Islam had achieved its miraculous success through the help and assistance of God, so have the Mussalmans met with this unparalleled downfall by incurring the displeasure of God. *وَنَالَهُ وَنَالِيَهُ رَاجِعُونَ* "Verily we live for God and to Him shall we return." When, next, we turn to the traditions of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) we there meet with a special reference to these times, and there also we find mentioned the same one cause of all this ruin and that is that the Mussalmans will incur the displeasure of their God.

Another fact which is worthy of note is that there has been no change in the personal bravery and heroism of the

Mussalmans. If we leave aside the exceptional times of the companions of the Prophet (peace be on him) then, it will be found that the Muslim soldiers of the present day have not shown fewer instances of self-sacrifice than the Muslim heroes of olden times. If the Muslim kingdoms of the present day have to suffer defeat at the hands of other rulers, the reason for it is not the want of courage in the Muslim soldier. On the contrary, it has generally been seen that the Muslim soldiers have endured greater dangers than their adversaries and still have remained unshaken. But nevertheless circumstances have arisen which inspite of their displaying the noblest feats of heroism have ultimately led to the defeat of the Muslims, and instead of winning the territories of their enemies, the Muslims have had to give up some of their own lands. If one will carefully study the wars of the Islamic countries during the last century, one will find that secret causes more than open ones have contributed towards their defeat. In many a battle it has happened that success and victory have everywhere attended the Muslim ranks, but towards the end something has occurred which has left the field eventually in possession of the enemy. Such occurrences oblige one clearly to admit that underlying all these losses, there must be operating, in addition to the material, some other secret causes, and this is nothing but what I have mentioned above, viz., that the Mussalmans have abandoned their God. At the present time there is, on the one hand, hardly any Islamic kingdom left which properly deserves to be called a sovereignty and, on the other hand, even those that remain are a source of affliction to the Muslims rather than of happiness. As a rule, governing power is a source of happiness to a people and the co-religionists of the ruler consider the government as a support of their faith, but the Islamic governments instead of proving a source of happiness to the Muslims have become a source of pain, and are so constantly in the grip of misfortunes as to make the whole Muslim world feel as if they lay on a bed of burning coal. Thus are these kingdoms, far from bringing any joy to the Muslims, become a source of constant grief and pain to them.

In short, the natural condition of the Mussalmans is so

weak that a materialist is forced to exclaim that the end of Islam is now at hand, and that within a few days there will be, for Islam, not a place to hide its head. The sight of such a predicament is sure to pain every sympathetic heart, and I know not if there is any Muslim who can view the plight without experiencing a pang. But worse than this, there is ~~some~~ thing more which goes, as it were, to completely break one's spine.

The loss of material power is certainly a dire calamity, because worldly possessions, to a degree, lend power to a religion. But even if they be absent and man be granted a life of peace, then the peace may also prove a great help and boon to his progress. Accordingly we see that there have been sent by God many prophets who never exercised any ruling power throughout their lives and passed their days under the rule of some foreign power, *e. g.*, Zechariah, John, and Jesus (peace be on them). If governing power had been the sole instrument of success of a religion, then these prophets would certainly have received it at some period or other of their lives. The fact that these prophets remained throughout their lives strangers to power proves that besides governing power, God has other instruments, which serve as means of the progress and success of a religion. The material weakness of the Mussalmans could not have been such a source of pain to them as is their weakness in matters of religion. At the present time the Mussalmans, at least in the countries under British rule, enjoy every freedom and suffer from no inconvenience in the observance of the practices of their religion. The call to prayer is claimed loudly in every mosque and the *Namaz* is performed five times a day. People keep the fasts, perform the *Haj*, pay the *Zakat* and the government never interfere in matters of faith. They have granted full religious liberty. Leaving aside other countries, the condition of India is no secret to us. It is not yet very long, that the Mussalmans were suffering serious hardships under the rule of the Sikhs and Maharattas, and the performance of religious duties was put under a ban. *Gurdawaras* and

temples are still existing which formerly were mosques. In my own village of Qadian there is a *Gurdawara* which was formerly the mosque attached to our house. But when the Sikhs raided the place by night and compelled my great grandfather to fly from the town, it was then, during the period of their rule, that the mosque was converted into a *Gurdawara*. Even now the traces of the *Mehrab* can be seen and the *Sakawas* are still standing. Thus we can well realise to what extremes a tyrannical government may go, and this is why we feel besides ourselves when we see the benefits conferred by the British Government, and find ourselves unequal to express our sense of gratitude for the freedom it allows in matters of religion. May God grant this beneficent government ever brilliant success. Black must be he of heart who does not recognise the benefits of this government and entertains a feeling of hostility towards it, in spite of the amount of freedom it allows. But on the other hand it is the goodness of the government again that causes us to feel the most acute pang when we see that the Mussalmans have derived no advantage from its just rule and have not properly appreciated the religious freedom granted by it. What was proper was that the Mussalmans should have taken advantage of these times of peace and made progress in religious matters. But as a matter of fact they are daily sinking the other way, and in proof of this the prisons of the country furnish sufficient evidence. How heartbreaking is the scene that meets a Mussalman as he takes a round through the jails when he finds all of them full of his co-religionists ! Their morals, instead of being superior, are much inferior to those of the other communities and their number in the jail is largely in excess of their proportion in the general population. Nor are their offences of a light nature. They are undergoing punishment for the foulest and worst of crimes. Theft, dacoity, rape, adultery, murder, rebellion, criminal breach of trust, cheating, thuggee, forgery, etc., what offence is there of which the Mussalmans do not stand guilty ? But these are only such offences of which the state can take cognisance. Besides them, there are many others the mere mention of which would make one stagger, but they are

being committed by the Mussalmans. There have been instances when even the forbidden degree of relationship has been violated. Their indifference to religion knows no bounds. The rich among them are engrossed in luxury and worldliness. The *Sufis* are taken up with songs and *kavalis*. The *Ulemas* are engaged in giving false *Fatwas* and in delivering edifying sermons which they never practise. The younger section of the community, who have imbibed the light of western learning, have gone to the length of denying the existence of God, and in their own circles designate a belief in the Deity as a doctrine lacking in evidence. They consider religion to be a mere fancy and *Shariat* (religious law) a bondage. The masses take their colour from those with whom they have most to deal. Lewd women who think it a pride to trade in their charms are found among the Mussalmans to an extent unknown in other communities.

In short the condition is such as can not fail to overcome with grief any sympathetic heart. Only the name of Islam has been left; with regard to actions hardly anything has been left of Islam.

THE REAL OBJECT OF ISLAM.

It is undoubtedly a fact that in Hindustan under the aegis of the British rule, the Mussalmans have made some advance in trade and education. But the progress can hardly be termed as the progress of Islam, because the chief object for which Islam took its birth, was, not worldly prosperity or an advance in material wealth, which have in fact little to do with the main purpose of Islam. That religion does not in the least deserve its name which sets down worldly prosperity as its end and aim. It is possible that some creed which is intended for a particular people or a particular country—like the creeds that flourished anterior to Islam—should have as its object the attainment of worldly prosperity, because it may happen that a nation in a state of degradation and degeneration might wish to attain to power under the cloak of a religion. But the claim of Islam is that it is for all the world and for all peoples; and being a universal faith affects equally the Arab, the Roman or

the Persian. Moreover, if the founding of empires were the real object of Islam, the work was already being done before. The Romans and the Persians had already their mighty empires. The Hindus and the Chinese were not weak in material power. If, therefore, it be considered that the object of Islam was to achieve worldly prosperity, there would seem no necessity for its advent because the treasures of the Caesars and the Kesras were richer than those of the Mussalmans, and the simplicity of the Islamic court could not in the least vie with the splendour of the courts of the Romans and the Persians. It is, therefore, highly unfair to Islam to suppose that its object was to achieve worldly prosperity or that the purpose of its advent was to raise new nations and to set them to earn the things of the world and to give them pre-eminence in the same. He must indeed be blind who can make such an assertion. And what right has any person to make such a baseless assertion against Islam when the Holy Quran itself explains the object of the Holy Prophet's advent in the following words :—" As I have sent among you a prophet from among yourselves who recites to you My proofs and arguments and (thus) purifies you (and leads you and raises you towards the highest goal) and teaches you the Book (and instructs you in the fine details of the Law and its hidden secrets and does not stop at those instructions which could be found in previous books but goes further) and instructs you in what you did not know before. Then remember Me so that I may give you rank in My presence, and be grateful to Me (for the favours I have showered upon you through this prophet) and be not thankless to Me." Thus it appears that Islam came to teach men knowledge and wisdom and proofs and arguments relating to faith and the unseen world, and the way to the purification of self and the attainment of the highest goal, and that spiritual knowledge which may help man to attain nearness to God. It did not come to teach men the way to earn material wealth or to found kingdoms and empires.

There is no doubt that Islam is a perfect religion and as such it does not forbid any necessary pursuit which may in

any way help the progress of man. Wherever it invites man to seek religious advancement, there it encourages him to seek the way to worldly progress as well. It urges all men to strive after honour and dignity. There is no useful learning which is discouraged by Islam. On the contrary, both the Holy Quran and the authentic traditions repeatedly urge the Muslims to cultivate all useful learnings. Similarly, as regards advancement in trade, industry and arts, Islam, far from discouraging them has recommended them to the attention of the Muslims.

Islam is a strong opponent of the creed that the rich can not enter the kingdom of Heaven or that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. Islam is a common creed for the rich and the poor and does not appertain to any special section. The principle of *Zakat* informs us that Islam does not forbid the accumulation of wealth and does not require that one must give away one's wealth in order to enter its fold. It does not say, you must not to-day take thought of the morrow, rather the Holy Quran enjoins "Man should to-day take thought of the morrow and should see what provision he has to day made for to-morrow." It is true that Islam discourages all sorts of fanciful and impracticable idealism, because they act as obstacles in the way of human progress and like canker prematurely infect the human soul.

In short, Islam does not forbid worldly advancement, rather it encourages the same. Still it will be the height of injustice to say that worldly advancement was the objective of Islam, because this object can as well be achieved without any creed. If Islam had not had its advent, would not have men all the same been striving after the world? As a matter of fact, the Holy Quran would tell us that the whole attention of man was already centred upon the world. For instance it says: "Those who are misguided, their endeavours are after this worldly life," and again "Never so, but rather they love what comes immediate (the world) and abandon what follows after (the next life);" and further on "Rather they take to the life of this world, but the next life is better and everlasting."

The fact is patent that man, as a rule, has a natural predilection for animal propensities and the reason is that those propensities have in them the property of quick satisfaction. It is due to this that man devotes so much of his time to the pursuit of physical comforts, and there are many who spend their whole lives in search of pleasures of diet, drink and dress. Their toil and endeavour of night and day are meant merely to satisfy their animal passions, and as the satisfaction of these depends largely upon the acquisition of material wealth and property, these men devote their entire attention to the world. And the further they are from truth and the more barren they are of the knowledge of God, the more are they absorbed in and engrossed with the acquisition of material wealth, because in the acquisition of these lie the means of satisfaction of their animal passions, which most of the time work so powerfully in men. Thus, a work which goes on spontaneously among mankind and which religion being discarded, becomes the only object of human life, to think with reference to such a work that it is the object to which Islam calls attention is to pronounce Islam a fatuity, because the work was already being performed before Islam came into existence and is the better performed when men cease to have any thing to do with Islam. For example, there are nations which are without any religion, the single object of whose existence is to acquire wealth and to satisfy their passions, and who find the joy of their heart to lie in eating, drinking and dressing and in a life of comfort. The acquisition of material prosperity and the satisfaction of animal passions and lower desires can not then be the objective of Islam, because the work goes on even without Islam and does not require the advent of a prophet for its accomplishment, human nature itself being for it a sufficient incentive.

Thus, if at the present time the Mussalmans under the protection of some just and fair minded government have, in imitation of the material prosperity of Europe, made an advance in commerce or shown an aptitude for modern learnings, such progress, however perfect it may be, can not be called the

progress of Islam. To be jubilant over such progress and to read in it any security for the future of Islam is a sign of gross ignorance and of a want of acquaintance with the essence of Islam. Had such material progress been the object of Islam, the object would appear to be fully achieved by the nations of Europe, whose attention is fixed upon the world to a greater degree than that of the Mussalmans, and compared to whose progress in trade and learning the progress of the Mussalmans is even less than a mole-hill compared to a mountain. The person must be seriously mistaken who is pleased to consider any intellectual, scientific or commercial progress of the Mussalmans as a progress of Islam, and is always urging the Mussalmans towards these minor branches of advancement. Had he considered it, he might have seen how little these matters had to do with the real object of Islam. As I have already said, Islam by virtue of being a true religion is helpful and favourable to the fulfilment of all beneficial ideas of the human brain and does not forbid any kind of progress. Rather, it encourages the Mussalmans to acquire every kind of learning and to achieve every kind of advancement. But nevertheless such advancements can not be deemed as the progress of Islam, and even if the Mussalmans should happen to beat their opponents in these fields, still their victory could not be termed as a victory of Islam.

It would thus appear that it is something quite different that is meant by Islam. As its name signifies, Islam denotes perfect submission to God, and complete obedience to His commands and the strengthening of the relation between man and the Master of the Universe. This was the object to the accomplishment of which the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) devoted himself throughout his life. All the works of his life, all his activities bear witness to the fact that the one purpose he had in view was that by all means the greatness of God might be made manifest on earth and that men should leave their passions and desires and turn towards God and that everything about them, their walking or sitting, eating or drinking, sleeping or waking, might be solely for the sake of

God, that they might be made free from all kinds of doubts and misgivings and attain to perfect recognition of God, that the barriers and veils which divide the creatures from the Creator might be removed, and that the creatures might see with their own eyes their Creator and Sustainer. This was the object of the Holy Prophet throughout his life, and if this object should disappear from among the Mussalmans, and if they should fail to fulfil this purpose, then whether or not they enjoy governing power, whether they prosper or decline in trade, whether they do or do not master the modern learnings, their advancement or their decline can bring no advantage or loss to Islam. Because when there is nothing of Islam left among the Mussalmans, then how can any material advancement of theirs afford any pleasure to the lovers of Islam, and how can the latter be pleased at their worldly prosperity in which they are far surpassed by the nations of Europe? So long as the main object of Islam is not attained, all the rest is futile. But, if one will reflect on the subject, one will find that the Mussalmans are daily going farther and farther from the true object of Islam, and as a matter of fact most of them are not even aware what that object is. They call themselves Mussalmans, but to them to be a Mussalman signifies nothing more than to belong to a community. They think that Islam is the name of a large community which includes many a smaller section, and to be a Mussalman means nothing more than to be born in a Mussalman family. Thus when men go daily farther and farther from the main object and when the leaders of the community consider the progress of Islam as identical with material progress, then surely the well-wishers of Islam must be sorry rather than be pleased to see how the real object of Islam has been lost and the attention of men has been taken up by insignificant things.

•The present condition of the so-called Muslim leaders is like that of a man who occupies himself with clipping the nails and dressing the hair of a dying friend and seems to be saying in high glee, "See what an improvement has been effected in his appearance." Foolish man! If he would not give his thought to the administration of medicine, the patient would

soon die. Embellishments depend upon life. If the man should cease to live, there is no value in the embellishments. Thus when Islam itself is nigh being lost and the Mussalmans are daily proving strangers to their religion and are becoming addicted to all kinds of vices, and faith in God is vanishing from their hearts, and when if a man calls himself a Mussalman he merely follows a custom, at such a time to devote one's mind to material prosperity, and to be jubilant over it is a foolish piece of work. The first object is to revive Islam in the hearts of the Mussalmans. If, however, they should remain strangers to it, then their material advancement can certainly be no source of joy. Islam is the soul of the Mussalmans, and when that is lost, there is little value in all these embellishments. These have only to do with the present life, but when the water of life runs dry, they become a source of pain instead of pleasure. It is a pity that instead of trying to rehabilitate Islam, the attention of the Mussalmans is fixed upon those in possession of worldly power and the influence which left them through loss of governing power they now seek to regain by trade and by proficiency in modern learnings. It would not have mattered if they had kept in view the main object and side by side had continued the worldly competition : but entirely to lose sight of the main object and to be absorbed in the world and in the meantime to let the real disease grow worse is certainly a most dangerous sign.

ISLAM IN TRIAL.

The consequences which have already resulted through the indifference to Islam are a more than sufficient eye-opener. There are thousands of men who have already abandoned Islam and embraced other faiths. Men whose forefathers considered it a pride and honour to follow the precepts of Islam, now point to a thousand defects in this religion. Not to speak of others, even from among the descendants of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) there are scores of families who have embraced Christianity. Even from this class, which for the sake of the Holy Prophet has been held in universal esteem for the last thirteen hundred years, have sprung up men who now stand

upon the public stage and openly abuse the holy person of the Prophet (peace be on him) and give public expression to their aversion to Islam. If any body should look closely into the condition of the Mussalmans, he would find many a Mussalman who is not only altogether ignorant about Islam, but has contracted an aversion to it, and this state of things is not confined to India alone but prevails in all countries. Even in the so-called Islamic countries, Islam is treated with as scant respect as in other lands. Islam has been left a fossil and instead of being considered worthy of admiration is deemed to deserve every blame. The faith which was the goal of all creation and in reference to which God had said, "Enter ye the religion of God in troops" would now seem to deserve the verdict "Leave ye the religion of God in troops." Hundreds of thousands of men have already abandoned the faith and the majority of those who consider themselves within the pale of Islam have only the outward aspect of Mussalmans; their hearts have been estranged from the faith quite as much as of those who have discarded even the name of Islam, or to say the least, they are as much ignorant about Islam and know as little about its truths as do the Christians or the Hindus. There are thousands who are ignorant even of the formula of the unity of God. These statements are altogether free from exaggerations, and there is nothing of fancy about them. Men who think about the subject know that the present condition of the Mussalmans is really what has been described here. Thus, the time is crying that this age is an age of decline, not only for the Mussalmans, but also for Islam, because Islam has ceased to find a place in human hearts. If there had been a loss merely of temporal power, it might have been said that the age is a time of trial for the Mussalmans, but the fact that people have ceased to have any acquaintance with Islam save by its name would go to show that the trial is not for the Mussalmans alone but also for Islam.

It will perhaps be urged that even now there are thousands nay hundreds of thousands, of men who perform the *Namaz*, that five times a day prayers are offered in the mosques, that

hundreds of people perform the pilgrimage in the days of the *Haj*, that hundreds of thousands of Mussalmans keep the fasts in the days of *Ramazan*, that there are many rich men who pay the *Zakat*, so, though it is true that a large number of people are ignorant of Islam there is still a section who knows Islam and practises its precepts. It should, however, be borne in mind that the object for which prophets are raised is not that men should offer their prayers in a particular form or that they should leave their native lands and travel in foreign parts or that they should endure hunger for certain days of the years or that they should give away a portion of their wealth, because in the absence of any ulterior purpose to burden men with these onerous tasks is not only foolish but is rather doing them a positive injury. If, therefore, any man should perform the *Nemaz* but reap no fruit thereof and be not even aware of the true meaning of prayer, then there is little to be pleased with in his *Nemaz*. The followers of other creeds do also offer devotions. How then does it happen that these devotions do not bear the same fruit as is borne by the devotions of a true Mussalman. The reason is that their devotions are void of that essence which is found in Islamic prayer. They are like a shell which has an outward resemblance to Islamic devotions, but is inwardly void of the properties which are found in the latter. If then the *Nemaz* of the Mussalmans should also be bare of the essence which gave it superiority to the worship of other faiths, there would remain no difference between them, for as a matter of fact the latter exceeds the former so far as severity is concerned. It is seen that among the Hindus there is in vogue many a form of worship the severity of which can in no way be rivalled by the Islamic *Nemaz*. For example, some of them would take their stand of a morning before the rising of the sun and turn their faces to the east, and as soon as the sun makes its appearance would fix their eyes upon its disc muttering all the while certain *Mantras*, and thus they would stand throughout the day with their eyes fixed upon the sun and would not turn them away for a moment till it has sunk below the horizon. Or in winter time some of them would stand in

cold water to perform a devotion and in summer would sit in the sun and kindle several fires around them and thus inflict upon themselves the tortures of hell. Thus in respect of severity the devotions of these men outdo the Islamic devotions. Now, therefore, if the *Namaz* of the Mussalmans should also become empty of its true essence, it will cease to have any superiority to these forms of worship.

THE QUALITIES OF TRUE ISLAMIC PRAYER.

In the Holy Quran Almighty God has described the qualities of Islamic '*Namaz*' in the following words : *ان الصلوة تنهى عن الفحشاء والمنكر* "*Namaz* deters men from indecencies and from evil ways." But we find that, with rare exceptions, the Mussalmans in general attend the mosques and offer their prayers, not only the obligatory ones but even the optional ones, but when they leave the mosques they eschew no manner of sin. They speak lies, they receive bribes, they practise deception, they shun not breach of trust and avoid not fraudulent practices in trade. In short, they are engaged in a thousand kinds of sins. How then can it be said that the Mussalmans perform their *Namaz*? Had they performed their *Namaz* in conformity with the conditions fixed by Islam, their hearts would have been purified, the foulness of sin removed and they secured against all vice and wickedness. Because in *Namaz*, God has kept hidden secrets such that whosoever performs it with proper embellishments and attends to the conditions assigned by God for its performance forthwith perceives a change in himself, and many days need not elapse before a special faculty develops within him by which he can discern what is evil. He is made wary of the most secret vices and is endowed with the power of recognising the most hidden sins which are not recognised by others. On every occasion angels give him warning saying "Beware, here is a sin. Take heed." He is given the power to fight with the devil, in as much as in his *Namaz* he declares the holiness of God and extols His praise and God does not choose to endure an obligation, but from Himself gives the best of rewards for the actions of His

creatures. Thus, when in *Nimaz* a man prostrates himself before His Creator in utmost humility and fear and trembling, and makes use of all the forms of humility which the people of any country have fixed to express the sense of subordination, then God raises him up, and just as the praying one declares the holiness of God, even so does God speak to His angels saying: "This servant of Mine has declared My holiness, do you also make him holy, and as he has extolled My praise, do you also spread his fame in the world; and as he has shown in My presence the utmost humbleness and holiness of spirit, do you give him esteem and elevation of rank." To this idea also points the tradition which occurs last in Bukhari's collection:—

كَلِمَتَانِ خَفِيفَتَانِ عَلَى اللِّسَانِ ثَقِيلَتَانِ فِي الْمِيزَانِ حَبِيبَتَانِ
إِلَى الرَّحْمَنِ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ

"There are two *Kalemas* (sentences) which feel light on the tongue, but are heavy in the balance and are very pleasing to the Rahman, viz., سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ "Holy is God and deserving of all praise, holy is God, the Great." And reflection will show that *Nimaz* is merely an elucidation of these two *Kalemas* and that the import of all the different operations in the *Nimaz* amounts to the same, سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ To declare God's holiness, to extol His praise and to proclaim His greatness, these are the things on which stress has been laid in *Nimaz*. In short, the purport of these *Kalemas* and that of *Nimaz* are identical,—*Nimaz* being a detailed exposition, and the *Kalemas* only an abbreviated expression of the subject detailed in *Nimaz*. Now, if one should carefully consider this tradition, one would find stated therein all the facts of which mention has been made above and that in the following manner. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be on him) says فِي الْمِيزَانِ That is, to declare God's holiness, to extol His praise and to proclaim His greatness, though apparently easy, are really productive of many fruits and are very heavy in the scales.

To understand this proposition it should be borne in mind

that man is, by origin, a combination of certain animal, vegetable and mineral parts and naturally has a predominating affinity for the things of the earth. He is lifted through the grace of God and is guided by His guidance. It thus happens that if a man is cut off from heavenly guidance or, in other words, if we assume a man to know nothing of Heavenly books, such a one will lead the life of a beast, his only activity will be to eat and drink, and he will be innocent of all those moral traits which mark man's superiority to the beast; and all the faculties with which God endowed him for his advancement will remain latent and he will be powerless to make use of them. Thus we see that those people who are deprived of Heavenly books, lead a life very similar to that of the beasts. They know nothing save to eat and drink and to satisfy their lusts. It would, then, appear that because man derives his origin from matter, his predilection, unless he is guided by God, is towards things material, and unless he receives light from God, he can not discover a way for the development of his soul. Only when he receives guidance from God does he begin to progress beyond the stage of other animals, and to the extent a man advances in spirituality does he differentiate himself from other animals, and a special characteristic begins to show itself in his actions. Keeping this essential fact in view, the significance of the above tradition will appear to be that if human nature, which is a combination of animal qualities, be placed with all its animal instincts into one of the scales of a balance, and in the other scale be placed all the consequences and fruits of those *Kalemas*, then the scale containing these *Kalemas* will sink. And it is plain that when one of the scales of a balance sinks the other goes up. Thus the lower the scale containing man's actions will sink, the higher will rise the scale in which is placed the nature of the man, and the higher it rises, the nearer will the nature approach to Divinity, because (by reason of being free from all defects and the centre of all excellence) God's Seat is high. Thus the fact of the scale of actions sinking or proving heavy signifies the exaltation of man which

is its necessary consequences. It is for this reason that in the traditions, the consequences of good works and piety have been described as exaltation. Again the words "exalt me," in which the Mussalmans have been taught to pray, bear the same significance, that is, "may the scale of my good deeds prove heavy so that I may be exalted." On the other hand, if the scale containing the animal nature of man should prove heavy the scale of good deeds would be lighter and would rise in the air and would prove of no benefit to the man, who would sink even deeper. To the same purport also points the following verse of the Holy Quran :—

فاما من ثقلت موازينه فهو في عيشة راضية - واما من خفت
موازينه فاما هاهنا

meaning "Of whomsoever the scale of good deeds will be heavy, he will attain an elevated life, but of whomsoever the scale of good deeds will be light and will not outweigh his animal qualities, he will fall into *Havut* by which is meant a deep pit which sinks ever lower and lower in depth. The same is the sense of also the following verse :—

ولو شئنا لرفعناه بها ولكننا ائخا الى الارض

meaning "If We wished We might have raised him by means of Our signs, but he contracted such an attachment with the earth that he would not leave it." Again the traditions which speak of paradise as a height and of hell as a depth point to the same idea that when the good deeds of a man become heavy, then his errors lose their weight and man in spite of his animal nature begins to be elevated and his virtues prevail over his vices and make them extinct, and man ultimately attains paradise which is on high. On the other hand, the man whose good deeds are few and insufficient to elevate him, will have the scale containing his good deeds gone up and the scale containing his self will sink deeper and deeper in proportion to his sins and will have its place in hell which is beneath. From this proposition may also be derived the fact of their being degrees in heaven and hell, because in proportion as a man's good deeds increase in weight will the man rise higher

and higher and attain a lofty station, and those whose evil deeds will preponderate will sink ever deeper and enter hell, so even those whose evil deeds will weigh extremely heavy will have the scale of their good deeds lifted very high and the opposite scale containing their selves will fall into *Asfalas safilin*.

In short, in the above tradition God has explained that the acts of declaring His holiness, extolling His praise and proclaiming His greatness are such plentiful producers of beneficial fruits that the balance for measuring the actions of the man is heavily swayed by them and his rank is elevated. The reason for this has been stated in the words *حبیبنا ن الی الرحمن* meaning that these *Kalemas* are producers of such plenteous rewards because they are pleasing to the Rahman. An ignorant man might think that the word 'Rahman' has been introduced merely for the sake of rhyme. Such an opinion would be grossly unfair to the great man not one of whose words is vain or useless. The word 'Rahman' has not been used in the tradition for the sake of rhyme, rather it has very grave significance. In these words *حبیبنا ن الی الرحمن* the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be on him) has explained the reason of the heaviness of the *Kalemas* *سبحان الله* to the effect that the reward for them does not appertain to the attribute of '*Rahimiyat*' alone, but also follows from the attribute of "*Rahmaniyat*," because the *Kalemas* have the power to attract the latter attribute of the Almighty God.

It should be remembered that by God's attribute of *Rahmaniyat* is meant that attribute by which favours are bestowed upon man without any toil or trouble on his part, and by *Rahimiyat* is meant that attribute which descends upon man in reward for some action of his. And since human actions are finite, their rewards, however liberal they may be, must after all be finite, and so it appears from the Holy Qur-an and the traditions that the rewards of good deeds are received ten-fold, seventy-fold and even seven hundred-fold or even in still larger measure. But nevertheless the reward is propor-

tioned to a certain extent with a view to the work. But the favour that appertains to *Rahmaniyat*, since it is not bestowed in return for any action, can have no limit assigned to it. Thus by the words *يا لى الرحمن* the Holy Prophet has signified that the reward for other devotions is derived from the attribute of *Rahimiyat*, but the afore-mentioned *Kalemas* attract the attribute of *Rahmaniyat*. In other words when man declares the holiness of God or extols his praise or proclaims His greatness, not only is the attribute of *Rahimiyat* set into motion, but the attribute of *Rahmaniyat* also comes into operation and descends upon him, and because this descent of *Rahmaniyat* bears no reference to deeds but is in the nature of a favour, therefore the scale of good deeds grows very heavy, because when the attribute of *Rahmaniyat* descends jointly with the attribute of *Rahimiyat*, no limit can be set to the magnitude of the result.

The real fact is—God has commanded His creatures *واذ احببتكم بتحيةة نزيها باحسن منها اوردوها* “When one speaks to you in a goodly address, it is meet that you should use in reply some better form of address or at least the same address. For instance, in reply to *السلام عليكم* “peace be on you,” you should say *وعليكم السلام* “And on you be peace,” How then is it possible that God who is the possessor of limitless treasures and the giver of the best rewards should not deal with His creatures in the same way? Yes, He does so, and assuredly He does so. For instance it has been related in the holy traditions: “When My creature takes one step towards Me, I advance two steps towards Him, and when he walks fast towards Me, I run towards him.” Agreeably to this rule, when any creature speaks about God saying “Holy art thou, oh God!” then God, on the one hand, gives him his reward for the devotion, and on the other hand commands that he should be made holy; because, He has said, *حيوا يا حسن منها اوردوها* (address him with a better address or at least the same address). And when God commands in respect of any of His creatures “Be thou holy,” then how can any

of his sins remain ? Similarly when a creature speaks in reference to his Creator, "God ! Thou art most worthy of praise," then does God make him worthy of praise, and when he declares the greatness of God, then God makes him great. Thus in declaring the holiness of God, in extolling His praise and in proclaiming His greatness there is received, on the one hand, the reward for the devotion and, on the other, God's attribute of *Rahmaniyat* being set into motion makes the devotee pure, praiseworthy and great. This is why the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be on him) has said in the tradition,

كَلِمَاتٍ خَفِيفَاتٍ عَلَى السَّانِ ثَقِيلَاتٍ فِي الْمِيزَانِ حَبِيبَاتٍ إِلَى الرَّحْمَنِ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ

Now since *Nimaz* is a detailed exposition of these *Kalemas*, and in every portion of it there is the declaration of God's holiness and praise and greatness, consequently God says in the Holy Quran (ان الصلوة تنهى عن الفحشاء والمنكر *Nimaz* deters men from indecencies and evil ways), because the more a man performs his *Nimaz* and makes declaration of the holiness, praise and greatness of God, the more does God make heavy the scale of his good deeds and the exaltation of the man proceeds apace. And since sin is the result of affinity with matter, the more a man is raised above the world, the smaller grows his affinity with matter and consequently he is made more and more secure from sin.

THE REAL NATURE OF THE PRESENT DAY DEVOTIONS.

It thus follows that if a man performs his *Nimaz* and declares God's purity and His praise and still experiences no elevation of his nature nor any purification, but on the contrary remains still afflicted with many a foulness, then obviously there must be some defect in his *Tasbeeh* (declaration of holiness) and *Tahmid* (extolling God's praise). Thus the fact of Mussal-mans' performing their *Nimaz* and persevering with the same is no proof that they are good or that there is left among them any true religiousity, because when their *Nimaz* does not produce the results which are proper to them, the *Nimaz* must

be marrowless and a thousand defects must have entered into it which have destroyed its fertility.

Similarly with reference to *Zakat* the Holy Quran has said *خذ من أموالهم صدقة تطهرهم وتزكّيهم بها* (legal alms) from out their wealth and by this means purify them both outwardly and inwardly." Now those people who pay *Zakat* but nevertheless experience no purification, whose possessions are not honestly acquired, but on the contrary who avail themselves of every legitimate or illegitimate means to add to them, and the love of the world is not cooled in their hearts, how can it be said of such people that they really pay *Zakat*.

Again, after announcing the commands relating to *Roza* (fasting), Almighty God has added. *كذالك يبين الله آياته للناس* "Thus does God rehearse His commands for the benefit of men so that they may turn God-fearing." But in this age we find that men keep fasts and still are bare of piety. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be on him) said that it was not the object of God to see men go hungry; the men who kept fasts but forsook not lying, God had no need that they should go hungry; as in the following tradition *عن أبي هريرة أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال من لم يدع قول الزور والعمل به فليس لله حاجة في أن يدع طعامه وشرابه* Therefore, if inspite of keeping the fasts men should not grow in piety, then obviously their fasts are not of the kind intended in the Holy Quran, because the reason for making fasting obligatory was to produce piety and not to keep men hungry. What need has God that He should command men to suffer useless hunger.

With regard to *Hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca) it has been commanded, *فمن فرض فيهن الحج فلا رفث ولا فسوق ولا جدال* "Then whoso in this month resolves upon *Hajj*, must not lust, nor transgress, nor quarrel during the *Hajj*." But the indignity with which *Hajj* is treated in these days is presumably well known to Your Highness. Far from aban-

doing fighting and quarreling during the *Hajj*, this time seems to have been specially set apart for these purposes.

In short, though there are some people who still carry out some of the precepts of *Shariat* (religious law) they do it in a way that their actions fail to produce the effect which ought to have been produced. Their *Nimaz*, their *Roza*, their *Zakat* and their *Hajj* are just the kind of actions performed by players one of whom sometimes assumes the role of king and takes his seat and holds his court, though actually he is a beggar. Though for a while he styles himself a king and a number of men waits upon him and plays the part of attendants and he commands over them, yet there is no reality in it all ; neither it makes him a real king, nor his companions become his attendants and his slaves, and the assumption of kingly role gives him none of the privileges and authority which are the prerogatives of a king. These people too, like true *Nimazis* (worshippers) outwardly perform the ablutions, enter mosques, go through the *Nimaz*, but all their works are mere make-believe. This worship of theirs has no value in the sight of God, because otherwise (God protect us from such a thought) it will amount to saying that these people fully perform the labour, but God deprives them of the reward which He promised for those who would perform *Nimaz* or *Roza* (fasts) or who would pay the *Zakat* or perform the *Hajj*. May God save us from such opinion !

Congregation in the mosque is of no value unless the heart is full of the love of God. The repetition of God's name on the tongue is of no value unless there is remembrance of Him in the heart. It is a pity that this relation of heart has now wholly disappeared. This kind of worship may please men but it cannot be pleasing to God, Who sees not the exterior but sees the heart. In the sight of God that worship has no value which has no sincerity in it. This is the reason why in spite of devotion, the heart is not purified and the piety and the security from sins which were promised for the truly devout are never attained.

THE PRACTICAL LIFE OF THE MUSLIMS THE GREATEST ENEMY OF ISLAM.

What a pity ! Once the fact of being a Muslim was a sufficient guarantee for one's being immune from vice, and whoever associated himself with Islam was credited with immunity from all manner of turbulence and wickedness (save as God might know and cases rare to a negation) But to-day the fact of being a Muslim has come to mean that a man is an idler and an extreme spendthrift who eschews no kind of sin. There are even instances of men whose condition has become so far degraded that they unreservedly declare that they are Muslims and therefore necessarily live in constant indebtedness spending away whatever comes in their way—as if to signify that it is the teaching of Islam that men should be spendthrifts and live in chronic indebtedness. Many a rich man I have seen who prefers Hindu employees to Muslim ones on the ground that they are more honest, industrious and diligent in their duties. This is certainly a most shameful fact for the Muslims.

Islam has many enemies, and in my opinion all the other religions are enemies of Islam. Islam possesses the truth and the other systems are well aware of the fact that if there is any religion which can attract the hearts of men by its intrinsic beauty, it is Islam. Accordingly, they are not mutually afraid of one another, but all are equally afraid of Islam, and therefore make a common cause against it. It is to this that the Holy Prophet referred, when he said *لَا أُدْرِي لِمَا أَهْلَ الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا بِإِسْلَامٍ* meaning that in opposing Islam all the other religions combine into one, though as a matter of fact among themselves they have a good deal of difference. And this is what is to be expected of them. We see among the grazing animals that how much so ever they may fight amongst themselves, but as soon as a beast of prey makes its appearance, they all combine to fight it, because they know that the chance of safety against the enemy is but small. Similarly, because Islam is, by virtue of its simplicity and beauty, so attractive that whoever with a mind free from prejudice goes to make a

study of it, can not help being captivated by its charms, therefore all the religions make a common cause against it. But nothing that Islam ever suffered from these external enemies has equalled the harm it has suffered in this age from internal foes. True it is that the poet has said—

“Of stranger’s hands I ne’er complain,
For friends were they who caused my pain.”

External enemies have during the last thirteen centuries been unceasingly trying to injure Islam but still without success. But within the last century or two members of the community themselves have made a total havoc with the vitals of the faith. On the one hand the Ulemas (doctors) undertook to represent the golden principles of Islam in such dark and terrible an aspect as served to scare away the men who had all but accepted the faith. They introduced Jewish legends into, and mixed up human ideas with, the pure teachings of the Holy Quran, and proceeded to make such curious commentaries as obscured beneath them the original beauty of the Holy Book. Just as a brilliant diamond can not show its lustre unless it is cut and cleaned of worthless matter, even so they shrouded the Holy Quran in the folds of such self-fangled commentaries as were calculated to lead an ignorant man to altogether deny the excellence of the Book, because he does not know that the picture presented to him is not that of the Holy Quran, but that its aspect has been altogether changed by its being painted over with the legends and tales of an alien people. Again, the harm which has come to Islam from the *Ulemas* of former days has been far surpassed by what it has suffered from the common actions of its present-day doctors, mystics, aristocrats and the masses. In other words, the wrong course of their lives has caused the Mussalmans to prove worse foes of Islam than even its enemies.

Islam, by reason of its many excellences, attracts to itself every one who studies it with a mind free from prejudice. And in spite of the recondite interpretation and strange legends which have been introduced into its commentaries, its essential truth is discerned by many a person, but then the

Mussalmans themselves become an obstacle in their path, because the lives of the latter are not such a view of which would induce a man to accept Islam. Thus the harm which Islam is suffering from the Mussalmans is more than what it is suffering from strangers.

Precept alone can never produce the same effect on man as example. There was a time when, as soon as any person heard about Islam, he at once felt a love for it, though many were deterred from openly joining it out of regard for worldly connections. But when they had once seen a Mussalman, they ceased to regard all worldly obstacles and accepted Islam in thousands. A study of Indian history will show that in India the spread of Islam was effected through the means of Hazrat Moin-ud-Din Chisti (may the mercy of God be on him) and his Khalifahs. But to-day things have been quite reversed. There are many persons who, after they have made a study of Islam, wish to embrace the faith. But it is in the nature of man that he wishes to see examples. Such men, therefore, before they accept Islam wish to see the condition of the Mussalmans. But when they go to any Islamic country and see the indifference, the indolence and the indulgence in crimes on the part of the Mussalmans, their minds feel a revulsion to Islam. In short, whereas in the early days of Islam the Mussalmans served to illustrate the greatness of Islam, to-day the existence of the Mussalmans has proved a great obstacle to the progress of Islam which thwarts thousands of good souls from accepting its truth.

For instance, it has been learnt from a reliable source that there was a certain Englishman who made a study of the principles of Islam and resolved to accept the faith. He was already convinced of the truth of the religion, but then the idea occurred to him that he should take a trip to some Islamic country and see for himself the condition of the Mussalmans and the practical example of Islam presented by them. With this object in view he arrived at the capital of a Muslim State. But unfortunately it so happened that it was then the time of the festival of Muharram, and the inhabitants of the city were

indulging in various masquerades. In the market places the Mussalmans were roaming about in the masques of leopards, tigers, monkeys and bears. The sight made him greatly wonder that Islam as found in practice was far different from Islam as found in books, and he was so much shocked that he became altogether estranged from Islam. Thus, if there is any obstacle to the path of Islam, it is the practical life of the Muslims themselves and the sight of the same not only causes a repugnance in the followers of other creeds, but also alienates from Islam the feelings of the future generations of Muslims. The fact can not be denied that in most Muslim families, it is to be found that the concern with religion is diminishing from father to son. Only a very small percentage of Mussalmans can be found who are sincerely convinced of the truth of Islam. In most cases religion has been left merely a matter of custom and habit.

SALVATION OF ISLAM LIES IN DIVINE SUCCOUR.

Now, Your Highness may well understand that if Islam is a true religion, and there is no doubt that it is a true religion, it can never stand to reason that in the presence of so many internal and external dangers God should have abandoned it and not come to its assistance. Admitting that Islam derived its origin from God and seeing the extremely precarious nature of its present condition, how can it be supposed that God has not made any provision to thwart all these internal and external dangers.

Islam is that religion for the spread of which the beloved of God, the blessed Prophet, sacrificed the whole of his life and for the propagation of which by day and night he surrendered all kinds of pleasure and comfort. Is it possible that the labours of such an elect soul should come to such an end as is presented by Islam to-day?

Human parents when they see their children in danger at once set about their rescue, and in spite of a thousand acts of disobedience on their part, the sight of this danger moves the parents' compassion. How can it then be that God should sit

quiescent at the sight of the dangers to Islam? Surely some provision must have been made from heaven to retrieve the condition of Islam.

The Holy Quran also lends support to this view in that it says *إنا نحن نزلنا الذكر وإنا له لحافظون* "Verily We revealed this remembrance and We are its Preserver" The preservation of the Quran is possible in two ways, first of the text and second of the meaning. And actually we see that for the preservation of the text of the Quran thousands of provisions have been made by God. It is now thirteen hundred years since the days of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be on him). All the religious books of the world have been tampered with and altered. But the Holy Quran is still extant in the same original purity, neither losing even by a part of a letter nor being added to in the least particular. Even the language of the Holy Quran has been preserved by God, for there is at present no other religion the language of the Divine book of which is now spoken anywhere on the globe. Sanskrit, Pehlvi and Hebrew are the three languages in which the books of the prominent religions of the world are at present extant. But all these languages are dead and only the language of the Holy Quran, in spite of its being one of the oldest of languages, is still living and since the time the Holy Quran was revealed instead of being reduced in extent has attained wider diffusion. Formerly Arabic was the language of Arabia alone, but now it is spoken in Egypt, Syria, Tripoli, Algeria, Morocco, Barbary and other countries. Millions of people are there who are conversant with the language, hundreds of thousands of *Hafizes* (those who know the Quran by heart), and millions of books in all the countries of the world are safe-guarding the language, and the promise of God is being most thoroughly fulfilled up to this hour. Now, when the provision of God with regard to the safe-guarding of the text has been so well fulfilled, how then is it possible that the provision regarding the preservation of the meaning should not be carried to effect. The book which is a mere dead script with no one left to follow it has nothing to give it preference over

a book which has been tampered with and altered. Because when the true meaning of a book has been lost to the world, it is really as much obsolete as the latter. It is therefore certain that there will always remain in the world a set of men who will practically fulfil the purpose for which the Holy Quran was revealed, and that whenever men should happen to lose sight of the same then forthwith there should be sent by God a man who should be a teacher and inform men of the real truth, and bring them back to the right path. The *Hadis* (traditions) also support the same view. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) is reported to have said :—

ان الله يبعث لهذه الامة على راس كل مائة سنة من يجدد لها دينها

“God will raise among this people at the beginning of every century such a person as will renew the faith of Islam. In other words the changes which men will have brought about in the faith of Islam through the intermingling of their own opinions and desires will be rectified by those reformers who will re-establish the faith, and through their means there will always be raised bodies of men who will safeguard the true meaning of the Holy Quran or in other words achieve the purpose for which the Quran was revealed and thus will Islam remain a living faith.

This is wherein consists the superiority of Islam to other faiths. Because if the excellence of a faith could be proved by stories and traditions, then there are more of such stories and traditions to be found among the Hindus than in Islam. If we were to recount miracles, they would tell us of mightier miracles and the Christians too would present us with quite a heap of miracles in support of their faith. And actually this is what they do. In fact it is one of the charges levelled at Islam by the other creeds that there was no miracle wrought in it. And it has so happened that even some of the so-called Muslim reformers, helpless under the weight of European criticism, have endorsed this false view of the Christian

missionaries. Thus it is impossible to demonstrate the superiority of Islam to other creeds on the basis of stories and traditions, because those creeds too possess many traditions, and there is no reason why we should ask others to accept our traditions while rejecting theirs. And if we begin adducing evidence to establish the authenticity of our traditions, then it will be such a lengthy process as will take years in the discussion and a long historical controversy will ensue and a decision regarding the true religion will become a most difficult affair. Islam therefore does not ask that its truth should be tested by stories and tradition, rather it claims to be a faith which can show living miracles and no age does pass wherein Almighty God does not show some mighty proof of its truth. This is the test in the production of which the followers of other creeds fall short, and when they are summoned to it, their eyes are cast down and their tongues are tied, and they display a poverty of argument and a dumbness of speech. And as a matter of fact the best evidence of a truth is that it should be accompanied in every age by its own proofs, because when any person does see with his own eyes the proof of the truth of a faith he can not possibly refuse to confess its truth.

THE PROOF OF THE TRUTH OF A RELIGION LIES IN THE ADVENT OF INSPIRED MEN.

All the religions of the world are now busy putting in each on its own behalf a claim to truth, and every one of them boasts of a noble ancestry. "Ours is the true system" say the followers of each creed and the proof of the fact is that God used to hold converse with our forbears." But quite different is the argument put forward by Islam. It says that the men who fully carry out its instructions are favoured by it with ever-living evidence of truth. The followers of Islam have no need to hunt up old books for stories. They may convince themselves of the truth of Islam by their own experience, because Islam does not close the door of Divine revelation but has left it open for all times. And in fact not only does it believe in the possibility of revelation, but positively requires

that the beginning of every century should see the appearance of an inspired reformer. Such was the promise of God vouchsafed to the Blessed Prophet (on whom be peace) and such shall always be the case of Islam.

This evidence is of a kind which no other religion has the power to emulate, because in no other religion save Islam has the door of revelation been left open. Every one of them asserts that the door is now closed and says that such things happened in the past but have ceased to happen now. But if revelation used to be vouchsafed in the past, it ought to be vouchsafed even now, because no attribute of God can ever be defunct. If in those ancient days God used to hold converse with His righteous servants, it is certain that He would hold converse even now, and if He does not hold converse now it would follow that He did not hold any converse even in those olden days. A contrary opinion would oblige us to admit that it was possible that at some future time God's attribute of hearing might also cease to exist and so also the attribute of sight, because if it is possible for one attribute to get defunct the same is possible for the other attributes as well.

In fact, the door of Divine revelation being left open affords a test which the followers of no other religion can face. Islam is the only champion of this field. No religion can have the temerity of even making a false profession, because it knows that in the ensuing contest the truth will be out.

Up to now thousands of men in Islam have been graced with this privilege, and no age has passed wherein there has not been present among the Muslims some claimant of Divine revelation. In the cemetery of every township inhabited by the Muslims there may be seen the grave of some holy man or saint who claimed to have been recipient of Divine revelation and to whom, in witness of his truth, God vouchsafed information of secret events. Just as in the matter of the *Shariat* (law) of Islam, there are four recognised *Imams* (authorities), similarly in the matter of spiritual teachings there are on the one hand the four well-known *Imams*, *vis.*, Syed Ab-

dul Qadir Gilanee, Hazrat Shahab-ud-Din Suharwardi, Hazrat Baha-ud-Din Naqshbandi and Hazrat Moin-ud-Din Chistee (may God be pleased with them all) with hundreds of successors who flourished in each school, and on the other hand there are besides these, many other holy men who enjoyed Divine propinquity and were graced with Divine communion. If they are enumerated their number will pass from thousands to lacs. These were men whose lives were for their contemporaries a living evidence of the truth of Islam. Thus it is not simply the verses of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) which prove the existence of such men, but actual events also testify that Islam has never been bare of such holy spirits who have attained the highest stages of spiritual development and thus borne witness to Islam being a living faith.

No body can deny the fact that there is no difference in the use of a tree which has ceased to bear fruit and of one that is barren by nature. Because when fruit-bearing ceases the only use of the tree is to serve as fuel. Thus a religion which has ceased to bring fresh fruits and of which one can only say that some time it used to bring fruits is no more fit to be kept among the fruit-bearing trees, rather it deserves to be consigned to the fire. The fruit of a religion consists in the production of such perfect men as enjoy the closest relation with Almighty God, men whose passions have suffered a death and who bear with them such manifest signs, that these persons may serve for others as a proof of the truth of their faith. If then the other religions are deficient in producing such men as claim to have attained Divine propinquity by following their respective systems, and to have been blessed with the high felicity of Divine converse, and may say that their faith is not based upon mere hearsay, but is grounded upon experience, then such religions are like fruitless trees and have no right to proclaim their truth. Even if it be conceded that at some previous time those systems used to bring fruits, still they can not for that fact be now deemed worthy of admiration. It can not be a matter of pride for the owner of any garden that at some

previous time his garden used to bring good fruits though it has ceased to do so now. So long as the garden used to bring fruits it was worthy of praise, but now it is merely so much firewood and does not deserve the name of a garden. And since Islam alone is such a religion the following of which has produced in every age such perfect men, therefore Islam alone can be the true faith, since none of the other religions can demonstrate the same virtue that their following has in any age produced such perfect men. In fact this is a feature special to Islam, and it is a promise of God vouchsafed to the Blessed Prophet that at the beginning of each century at least one such person will be raised who will renew the faith.

If now we were to suppose that at any future time this virtue should disappear from Islam, and that thenceforth the advent among the Muslims of such perfect men should cease such a supposition would be atrocious in the extreme, because it would amount to saying that God (may He protect us) was a breaker of promise Who made a certain promise to the Seal of the Prophets (peace be on him) but after a time ceased to observe the same, or it would follow that the Blessed Prophet was guilty of a mis-statement (may God protect us) or that Islam would then join the rank of the dead systems and would be empty of the Holy Spirit which gave it pre-eminence over other faiths. But these are idle fancies. Neither is God a breaker of promise nor is the blessed Prophet capable of a mis-statement. Nor can Islam ever join the rank of the dead systems, because it is the last religion intended for humanity, and there is no other dispensation to come after it, so if this faith too should die, there would be left no provision for the guidance of the world. After Islam there is no room for any new faith because the *Shariat* (law) has been perfected and after a perfected *Shariat* there remains no need for any other *Shariat*. Thus these are all mere idle fancies. Islam is a living faith and shall continue to display its miraculous powers till the end of the world. It is from this faith alone that spiritual life can be obtained and save it there is no door which can give man access to God.

THE PROMISED REFORMER OF THE PRESENT AGE.

Now, when on the one hand it is established that Islam is a living faith and that it is incumbent that a reformer should appear in it at the commencement of every century, there being a promise made by God to that effect in the Holy Quran, and when on the other hand it appears that the present age stands in need of such a reformer who can eradicate its evils and re-establish the faith of Islam and overthrow its foes and rectify what has gone wrong with it in matters both internal and external, then the question arises, Where is the reformer who has been raised by God at the commencement of the current century. In answer to this question let me convey to Your Highness the gladsome news that we too in this age through the mercy of God have not been deprived of this blessing and that God has out of His grace raised at the commencement of this century a mighty man who in his grandeur is superior to, and nobler than, all the reformers that have gone before. His name is Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, who was sent by God to the earth in the rank of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, and who discharged his mission and left this world in his appointed time. And it is in reference to his claims that the sign has come to me to deliver to Your Highness the present message.

THE NEED OF A DIVINE REFORMER.

From what I have said above, it is evident, that at present the condition of Islam is weak to an extent, which is without a parallel in the previous history of the faith, and there have arisen to it so many enemies, both external and internal, that escape from their attacks would be impossible without assistance from heaven. And if God should have made no provision for the removal of these dangers, then the end of Islam would have been no other than ruin, because now human means can avail nothing, when the doctor and the patient are alike infected and the learned and the mystic, the rich and the poor are equally indifferent to, and unaffected

by the faith, and the flood of vices is rushing so violently that to stem it is beyond the power of man. It may well be said that the indifference to religion, which prevails at the present time, had never its like to show in the past history of the world, the reason being, that the material progress of the modern times is without an example in the past, and it is a rule that the growth of ambition and avarice leads men to plunge deeper into sins. It thus happens, that as this age exceeds all other ages in the supply of worldly enjoyment and comfort and progress of secular learning, so also it surpasses all other ages in the multitude of vice, and the assault of the devil is deadlier in this age than in any of the preceding ages; because previously vices flourished, as a rule, by means which smacked of barbarity, but now they have been more firmly implanted in the minds of men by being dressed in the garb of culture; and the progress of the latter has led man to fancy that he is the entire master of his actions, and that it was merely a folly on his part to think that there was a controlling mind to look after the world, the fact being that the machinery of the universe was merely working under certain laws of nature, the keys to a good many of which had already come to his hands and he would soon acquire the rest for a little more effort and thus become the absolute master of his fortune. Thus the present assault is deadlier than all previous assaults, and to subdue it there is the need of some person enjoying a specially close relation with God, who might allay the discord through the influence of his holy spirit and offer living evidence of the power and authority of God, so that the affections of men which are now tied to the world might get cooled and be directed towards the Almighty.

A DIVINE REFORMER WAS PROMISED IN ISLAM.

The gravity of the present dangers is obviously such as might occasion the utmost despair. But when we find the mention of them occurring in the Quran and the traditions for the last thirteen hundred years, we feel encouraged and

the confidence grows that when the prophecies of a person concerning these troubles made thirteen hundred years before the event, have been fulfilled to the letter, it is certain that the remedy prescribed by him will also be fully effective and that God, Who had so long saved Islam from the attacks of its foes will also succour it at the present juncture. What then is this remedy? It is the advent of a person who, endowed with the spirit and power of Jesus, will save the world from the peril of Christianity, and, vested with the rank of the Mahdi, will quell the distempers of the Moslem society and bring about an internal reformation of the same. People will be healed by his breath, in as much as by faithful following he will come to be such a perfect image of the Holy Prophet that the work done by him will veritably be the work of the Holy Prophet, from whom he will cease to be separate. This is what God refers to in the following Quranic verse: **وَأَخْرِجَ مِنْهُمْ لِمَا يَلْحَقُوا بِهِم** which means that the Holy Prophet will twice undertake the guidance of the world—once in his own time, the time of the holy companions, and once again in the latter days, when he will teach a company who will be far, in point of time, from the holy companions. Now, it is clear, that the Holy Prophet is dead and cannot return to the earth. The verse, therefore, means that some other person in the spirit and power of the Holy Prophet will by perfect obedience and submission to him bring about in this age the reformation and revival of Islam. His reforms will, count as the reforms of the Holy Prophet himself, because he will be so completely taken up by the love of the Holy Prophet as to lose his individuality in that of the Holy Prophet. Their mutual relation will be such as has been described by a poet—

I merged in thee, thou merged in me, I the body,
thou the soul ;

So n'er may it be said again each of us a separate
whole.

This close relation is also referred to in the tradition in which

the Holy Prophet is reported to have said that the Promised Messiah will be buried in the same grave with him; because it is incredible that the grave of the Holy Prophet will actually be opened at any future time in order to receive the Messiah. This would be such a piece of sacrilege as could not be endured by any Mussalman, and so long as there was one true Muslim living, he would never suffer the grave of the Holy Prophet to be opened before his eyes. It thus being quite unthinkable that the grave of the Holy Prophet should at any time be opened to receive the body of the Messiah, the tradition can only signify that the Promised Messiah would be so much like the Holy Prophet as to be vouchsafed a place by his side. Moreover, the word قبر (kabr) also means the place where human souls are kept after death, as we find in the Holy Quran ثم انا لله ما لله فا قبره "Then We make him die and afterwards We put him in the kabr." In this verse the word قبر can nowise be understood in the commonly accepted sense of grave, because there are millions of men who are never buried but are burnt instead. The word قبر therefore means, that he is kept in a place where souls are kept after death; and this is the 'kabr,' which, it is said, will enlarge itself in the case of believers and narrow itself in the case of unbelievers. Thus, it is evident from the tradition that the Promised Messiah will be a perfect image of the Holy Prophet by virtue of his complete obedience to him. The prevailing disorders of the time also require the advent of a person who might be a perfect counterpart of the Holy Prophet, because the quelling of the present disorders is beyond the power of an ordinary man. The rank of a person charged with a duty is proportioned to the importance of the duty. The age, therefore, requires the advent of a person of the highest calibre to allay its distempers, because of Islam there has now been left nothing but the name, true faith has vanished, and of the Quran only the words have been preserved, but the sense is in imminent danger of being obliterated. The present condition of Islam is in fact similar

to that of the time of its first advent, for though there are now many a so-called Muslim, yet, even as at the time of the Holy Prophet the faith was limited to only a small number of persons, the true spirit of Islam has now disappeared from the world or is confined to only a few select souls. The work of the present reformation is therefore similar in magnitude to that performed by the Holy Prophet, and this fact is also deducible from the Chapter of Jumma of the Holy Quran, viz., that the Holy Prophet was to undertake the reformation of the world for a second time, which meant, in other words that some person, in the character of the Holy Prophet, will effect the reformation of the world. Again, a study of the traditions goes to show that the Holy Prophet will have a perfect manifestation in the Promised Messiah, because of him alone it is said that he will be buried in the same grave with the Holy Prophet. These facts considered together would prove that this age is the time for the appearance of the Promised Messiah and he alone is fitted to be Promised Mahdi of the century, because of him it has been said in the traditions لا مہدی الا عیسیٰ "There is no Mahdi but Jesus," meaning that when the Promised Messiah will appear he will be the Mahdi and there will be no other Mahdi besides him.

THIS IS THE TIME FOR THE ADVENT OF THE PROMISED REFORMER.

Thus this is the age when the Promised Messiah was to appear; and now that 30 years of the 13th century have already elapsed, the nonappearance of any reformer or in other words the non-advent of the Promised Messiah would be a grave disasters for Islam, because if one were to admit that there has been the advent of no reformer at the commencement of this century, then it would afford the enemies of Islam a rare opportunity to hold up the faith to scorn. For, now the spread of modern learning has inclined the thoughts of men towards atheism and the opinion is expressed that no such claimant can make himself accepted in the world in this age when education

has become so general. If, therefore, this century were to go without the appearance of a reformer, it would be a matter of great joy to the enemies of the faith, because the fact would prove the truth of their contention, viz., that revelation and Divine communion were mere impostures, that the claim to Divine propinquity set up by men in earlier ages, which gave them a following, was only due to the general ignorance of the times ; otherwise, they would say, why should the claim of Islam that there must be a reformer at the head of every century fail to be fulfilled in reference to this century. If the claim has been fulfilled in the past centuries, why does no reformer make his appearance at the beginning of this century ? The fact is, they would say, that because by reason of the spread of education, it is now impossible for any person to succeed with such a claim therefore no one has ventured to come forth with one. In short, if this century were to go without its reformer, then not only would God be open to the charge of a breach of His covenant, but all that remained of strength would be lost to the Muslims, because it would furnish their enemies with a weapon from which there would be no means of escape. The condition of the time is such that even if there were never before this the advent of any reformer, and even if there happened to be no promise to that effect vouchsafed to the Muslims, still it was necessary that a reformer should arise in this age to silence the enemies of Islam with the most convincing arguments, far from the succession of reformers having proceeded so far to come to a stop at the present time.

THE SIGNS OF THE AGE HAVE BEEN FULFILLED.

But, as I have already said, the Almighty God did not let this age go without its reformer, but agreeably to the promise made by the Holy Prophet and the requirements of the time, He sent a person who was fitted to remedy the disorders of the age, and through him reestablished the lost glory of Islam and humiliated and crushed its foes. I have also showed how this age is the age assigned for the appearance of the Promised

Messiah. It therefore happens that apart from the consideration of the needs of the time, all those signs which have been related with reference to the advent of the Promised Messiah have met with their fulfilment in this age and corroborated the fact of this being the age of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi. For instances the Holy Prophet foretold of a remarkable sign of the Promised Mahdi in that in his time there would happen in the month of Ramzan a lunar eclipse on the first date and a solar eclipse on the middle date, and he even proceeded to remark that such a sign had never occurred up to his time since the creation of the world. The tradition runs as follows:—

ن لمد ينا أ يتن لم تكونا منذ خلق السموات والارض ينكسف
القمر ولا ليلة من رمضان وتكسف الشمس في النصف منه

This was a most remarkable sign about which there was a consensus of opinion both among the Shiahs and among the Sunnis, and it was fulfilled about 20 years ago. There are, however, people who would object to the sign on the ground that the occurrence, to which the prophecy has been applied, was one in which the lunar eclipse occurred on the 13th day of Ramzan, and the solar eclipse on the 28th of the month, whereas the prophecy mentioned the dates as the first and the middle respectively. With regard to this, I would point to Your Highness that the objection is only due to lack of deliberation, because in this tradition the word قمر 'Qamar' has been used and قمر in Arabic is used for the moon after three days of its first appearance. The name for the new moon in Arabic is ل and not قمر. This special significance of the word قمر will be found not only in the larger Arabic lexicons such as the *Lesan-ul-Arab*, but even in the smaller dictionaries. For example the work منجد the gives following meaning of the word:—

القمر كوكب يستمد نوره من الشمس فينعكس على الارض
فيرفع ظلمة الليل وهو قمر بعد ثلاث ليال الى اخرها لشهروا ما
قبل ذلك فهو ل

But the pity is that at the present time proficiency in Arabic has disappeared from the Mussalmans and ignorance has got the sway over them. To interpret the tradition in the sense that there will be a lunar eclipse on the first day and a solar eclipse on the 15th day of the month is alike opposed to the usage of the Arabic language and the law of nature, because according to the latter a lunar eclipse can take place only on the 13th, 14th or 15th, and a solar eclipse on the 27th, 28th or 29th of a lunar month. By the first night is therefore obviously meant the 13th which is the first of the nights assigned for a lunar eclipse and by the middle day is meant the 28th which is the middle date of the three assigned for a solar eclipse, and these were actually the dates on which the eclipses took place, thus furnishing another proof that this age was the one assigned for the appearance of that Mahdi who was to be known by the name of the Messiah.

Similarly another sign of the age mentioned by the Holy Prophet is *ليتركن القلا من فلا يسمي عليها* meaning "camels will be abandoned and no one will use them for riding. The Holy Quran also says *واذا لعشا ر عطف*, meaning that camels in the tenth month of pregnancy will not be valued and will be left to roam at large. As a matter of fact, at the present time the usefulness of these animals have been much reduced by the introduction of railways, which have already reached Medina and is proposed to be extended to the holy land of Mecca. Here is therefore another sign which, has been fulfilled in due time and has proved this age to be age of the Promised Messiah. In a like manner there were prophecies made about the spread of newspapers and books and the improvement of irrigation works as it has been said :—

واذا لصحف نشرت and واذا لبعا ر سجرت

And to-day the invention of the printing press has multiplied books and newspapers and railways have facilitated their diffusion to an extent which needs no description. Again the

fact is well known and requires no proof how in this age canals have been opened and water from the rivers has been drawn off till the beds have been left dry. Similarly, there were many other signs, which, it was said, would indicate the age of the Promised Messiah and the approach of the last day, and they have all duly met with their fulfilment. Thus it clearly follows from the testimony of the Holy Quran and the traditions that this age is undoubtedly the age of the Promised Messiah. In fact the age commenced 83 years ago because it is clear from the traditions that the reformer is to come at the beginning of every century, and now the 13th century has already elapsed and more than a third of the 14th has also been passed.

INDIRECT EVIDENCE OF THE TRUTH OF THE CLAIM OF MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD.

Now, when it is proved that this age is the age of the Promised Messiah and the time of his advent is the beginning of the century there is no more excuse left not to accept the claim of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, because besides him there is now no other person on the face of the earth setting up a similar claim or even the claim of being a Mujaddid (reformer). Only two alternatives are left open. Either the claim of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad should be accepted, or this grand prophecy of Islam, in spite of the fulfilment of its signs, should be discredited and the truth of Islam be denied (God forbid). The opponents of Islam are rightly entitled to ask the Mussalmans to point out to them the reformer of this century, about whose advent at the beginning of every century a promise was given to the Muslims. Similarly, they may question the Muslims about the coming of the Promised Messiah saying, that of the time assigned for his coming 32 years have now elapsed, still why does he fail to make his appearance, when the nonappearance of any such claimant would cast a doubt on the truth of Islam. Likewise, the opponents may say to the Muslims, that if it is true, as they state, that Islam is the chosen and approved religion of God,

then it is essential that now when Islam finds itself in a most dangerous situation, the like of which it has never experienced before and worse than which there can not be a plight which can overtake the faith, when internal and external enemies have so completely marred its true spirit as to leave no trace of the original faith, it is essential that at such a time the Almighty should have raised a champion who might restore the faith to its original glory and strengthen its foundations ; but since God did not come to the assistance of Islam, on the contrary left it to be humiliated and crushed in every way, it follows, that the faith is not the religion chosen of God. People who do not admit the advent of any reformer at the beginning of this century, have no answer to give to such an objection, nor also those who though they see those signs fulfilled which were to indicate the advent of the Promised Messiah are yet not prepared to accept any person as the Promised Messiah. But through the grace of God the Ahmadi community are in a position to give an immediate answer to such an objection saying that, praise be to God, this century too has not passed without a reformer; and it is no ordinary reformer, but even the Promised Messiah himself, whom God has sent in this age, and through whom He has re-instated Islam and restored to it its original glory. Thus has not God left Islam alone in its dangers ; rather, He has rendered it such assistance, as has raised a wail in the camp of its foes.

I have so far cited to Your Highness arguments to prove that the present condition of Islam cries for a reformer, that the reformation of the Mussalmans is conditioned upon some person being Divinely raised to effect their reformation through the power of his holy spirit, that a promise was left by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings on him) that the Messiah would be raised in the latter age, which is the same we are now in, that the time for the advent of the reformers is the beginning of the century, which we have already passed, that at the present time there is no one claiming to be the Messiah

and Mahdi save Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, that consequently a denial of his claim will necessarily lead to a denial of the truths of Islam, because such a denial will imply that at the time when the need was most acute the promise remained unfulfilled which was made thirteen hundred years ago and which was regarded as an important evidence of the living force of Islam.

TWO POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS.

At this point there will arise two more questions, which I consider necessary here to discuss. The first has reference to the current Muslim belief, that the first Messiah or Jesus is still alive waiting in the sky, who will come to the earth, a second time and will be charged with removing its corruptions. Contrary to such a belief it is usually urged, how can it be possible for Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to be the Promised Messiah? The other question is, that since an important sign of the coming of the Messiah is the appearance of the Dajjal (anti-Christ), how it is possible that the Messiah should have come until the Dajjal has made his appearance?

IS JESUS OF NAZARETH STILL ALIVE IN THE SKY?

In answer to the first question it may be stated that neither in the Holy Quran nor in the authentic traditions, it is anywhere stated that the first Messiah (peace be on him) who was a prophet for the tribes of Bani-Israel, is still living and will come to earth for a second time. This belief found its way among the Mussalmans from those Christian proselytes, who in the early days of Islam joined its ranks in large numbers. Since they had previously regarded Jesus as the Son of God and could not all at once eradicate from their hearts the exaggerated notion of his dignity, they happened to bring with them traditions of a kind which served to magnify the glory of Jesus, and the Mussalmans in their simplicity, instead of winning over the Christians to the right views, themselves absorbed the belief of the Christians, and fell a prey to a most

dangerous error. As a matter of fact the Holy Quran "when ever it speaks of Jesus, invariably makes mention of his death and what is more curious, is that in the case of no other prophet has such stress been laid on the fact of his death, as in the case of Jesus, which latter has been adverted to in diverse passages, the reason being that God, who is all-knowing, knew that this was a question which at one time would prove the ruin of the Mussalmans. God says :—

يا عيسى اني منوفيك ورا فمك الى و مطورك من الذين كفروا
وجا عل للذين اتبعوك فوق الذين كفروا الى يوم القيمة

(Oh Jesus! Myself shall cause thee to die and exalt thee towards Myself, and establish thy purity from those who have this belief and make those who have followed thee dominate over those who have disbelieved, till the day of judgment). In the face of this verse, for a Mussalman to say, that although Jesus has ascended the sky, still the promise of his death, which in the verse occurs before the promise of ascension, has not yet been fulfilled, would be a serious impudence. No man has the right to change the order of words as fixed by God. The Holy Quran is a book of law and it is the duty of the Muslims to follow its dictates. Your Highness can well realise what confusion there will result if it be permitted to shift from their places the words of the Holy Quran when one proceeds to interpret the same. No earthly authority would permit such liberties with the sections of its codes, and if any judicial officer should indulge in such tricks, he would forthwith be removed, for he would prove himself unworthy of his place. In your position as a ruler, it is easy for Your Highness to realise the serious harm that would follow from such shuffling of the words of law without explicit authority of the legislature. How improper then must it be to rashly make the words of the Divine revelation follow one's own views and to say about any instance one pleases, that it is a case of wrong transposition of words. Who can boast of a purer diction than God; who could Himself, if He chose, have altered the

arrangement of the words? For weak man to place himself in opposition to God and to undertake to change the arrangement of the words as used by the Almighty, is the height of absurdity. Of course it would have been otherwise if such transposition were authorised by the Holy Quran itself or justified by the sanction of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him), but without any of these, to indulge in such rashness is the height of indiscretion. Even secular authorities would not tolerate such liberties with their laws, how then can they be countenanced by God, Who is All-knowing and All-wise in reference to His revelations? May He protect us from such excesses!

Your Highness might have noted how explicit was the verse on the question of the death of the first Messiah. God said to Jesus that He would cause him to die, and exalt his rank, and establish his purity, and till the day of judgment grant to his followers dominion over his disbelievers. We have seen how all these promises have been fulfilled. His rank has been exalted, the Holy Quran has declared his freedom from all the imputations charged to him by the Jews, and his followers have already had the upperhand of his disbelievers. Now, if it be true that the promise regarding his death still remains to be fulfilled, then its fulfilment must wait till the day of judgment, because the period assigned to the last promise extends to the day of judgment. If, on the other hand, we hold that the promise regarding his death was to be fulfilled before the other promise, then since the Christians have already had the upperhand of the Jews, the promised death must already have taken place. Moreover if it be granted that it is a case of wrong transposition of words and that the promise regarding Jesus' death will actually see its fulfilment after the other promises, then since the time of the latter extend up to the day of judgment, it will amount to saying that when the rest of mankind will be raised from death, then will be the time of the Messiah to die. This is, however, absurd, because then

will be the time of bringing to life, and not of causing to die. It will tantamount to saying that Jesus will altogether escape death. This, on the one hand, will be contrary to the promise contained in the word **مَتَوَفِّيكَ** and, on the other, will oblige one to admit the divinity of Jesus, because it is only the person of God, that is immune from death. In short, the transposition of the words would raise such a multitude of difficult questions as would altogether tear into shreds the faith of Islam, and what Mussalman is there who of his own choice would seek the ruin of his faith?

THE THEORY OF THE WANT OF ARRANGEMENT IN THE HOLY QURAN.

The fact is that, it is only due to a lack of adequate deliberation that the theory of wrong arrangement of words in the Holy Quran has found acceptance among men. Otherwise as has been said "the sovereign's word is the sovereign word." The language used by the King of kings in whose presence all the potentates of the earth stand in fear and trembling, and whose dependents they always are, is altogether free from all such faults, and the words used by Him must all be right in their own places, and no one is justified to change their order. Any such change, if introduced, is sure to spoil the sense. Just as I have now explained, how in the verse **يَا عِيسَىٰ اِنِّى مَتَوَفِّيكَ** if one were to admit a faulty arrangement of words, then no time would be left for the fulfilment of the promise of the death of Jesus, because since all the rest of the promises have been fulfilled, the time for the fulfilment of the promise of death, supposing the same to have remained unfulfilled, after **الْقِيَامَةِ** **اَلْیَوْمِ** can be assigned only, from which it would follow that the Messiah would never suffer death. It seems therefore to be the better way not to charge the Divine revelation with any error in the arrangement of words. Such assumption, on the one hand, is derogatory to God, and on the other is an evidence of the scantiness of one's own knowledge. I shall now proceed to cite to Your Highness

one or two cases which have been considered as instances of faulty arrangement of words, but in which actually the critics themselves have been at fault, the words in the Holy Quran being rightly used where they are and stand in no need of transposition.

For example, some learned men have cited the passage *هو منزل بما انزل اليك وما انزل من قبلك* as an instance of wrong transference of words, because having regard to the order of events the mention of what had been first revealed should have preceded the mention of what had been revealed later, and therefore *ما انزل من قبلك* should have come first in the sentence. Such critics have confined their attention only to the side of the question, viz., the succession of revelations, and have left out of sight, the other fact which may go to determine the order in a narration. For example when there is mention made of two persons then most often the order of their mention will be determined by seniority in age, but some times the order may be determined by the nature of their relation, and it would be foolish to object to such arrangement. We see that when a comparatively young officer calls at some body's place, the latter showers his welcome and attentions upon him, and not upon the more aged subordinates who might form his company. Precedence in mention does not therefore depend only upon the order of events. Very often the arrangement is determined by rank, objects of a higher rank being mentioned before those of an inferior rank.

It is superfluous for me to prove that a Mussalman's faith in the Quran is not derived for his belief in the Old and New Testaments, but that on the contrary his faith in the latter books follows from his belief in the Quran. Because if the Holy Quran had not borne witness to those books, and endorsed the claims of Moses and Jesus (peace be on them), then we should have been left without any evidence to persuade us to believe those two personages to be prophets of God. A Mussalman believes in the older books not because he has demon-

trated their truth, but because the Holy Quran declares them to be true. Failing such a testimony many a Mussalman would have altogether refused to include these books among the heavenly scriptures, because the mutilations in them are so numerous that a study of them goes only to fill one with wonder. For example the Pentateuch closes with the following passage regarding Moses—"So Moses, the servant of the Lord died but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day and there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses"—which clearly shows that the book was written after the death of Moses. How can we then regard the books as the revelations of Moses? In short, if we believe in the Old and the New Testaments, it is only because the Holy Quran says that they were originally revealed by God. Our belief in them is therefore not direct, but derived from the Holy Quran and the Divine revelation **يؤمنون بما أنزل إليك** **وما أنزل من قبلك** is perfectly correct, and can not be changed with the fault of wrong transposition, because the full signification of the passage could only be expressed by the order of words as it stands. If the order be transposed and **أنزل إليك** be read after the other portion of the sentence, assuming the same to be a case of wrong transposition of words, then there will altogether be missed the delicate reference which the sentence contains to the service which the Holy Quran has rendered to the older scriptures, and the language will be altogether bereft of its elegance, because though the books came before the Holy Quran in the order of their revelation, still the belief in them comes to a Mussalman only after he has believed in the Holy Quran. For when a Hindu embraces Islam he does not believe in the Old and the New Testaments first and in the Holy Quran afterwards, but he begins by believing in the Holy Quran, and believes in the older books when he finds confirmation of them in the latter. Since the verse deals with the subject of belief, and the belief of a Mussalman in the older books comes after his belief in the Holy Quran, it necessarily follows that in interpreting the

verse, the same order should be maintained in which it occurs in the Holy Quran ; and those who have considered it to be a case of transposition have failed to catch that underlying import of the passage which has just been explained.

Of a similar nature is the verse in the Chapter 'Juma ' which runs as follows :—

وَادَارُوا تِجَارَةً أَوْ لَهْوًا مُنْفَضُوا إِلَيْهَا وَزُرْ كُوكَ قَالَمًا .
قُلْ مَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ اللَّهْوِ وَمِنْ التِّجَارَةِ - وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الرَّزُقِينَ

This is another of the verses from which it has been concluded that the order of words in a verse need not necessarily be followed in its interpretation. In this verse the word *تِجَارَةً* at one place precedes the word *لَهْوًا*, but in the second place the word has been reversed, from which it has been argued that order signified nothing, for otherwise, why should the same two words be mentioned, in the same verse in two different orders. But the closer I consider the verse the clearer does it appear to me that contrary to the surmise of those who have assumed it to be a case of transposition, the verse furnishes a proof of the fact that every word of the Holy Quran has been most appropriately used in its own place, and would admit of no displacement, and that the verse instead of being an argument for want of arrangement in the text goes to prove the existence of the same. I shall here explain the point in more detail. In this verse two facts have been mentioned : One is that at the sight of *trade* and *play* the people are wont to leave the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) and disperse ; the other is that the blessings with God are more valuable than *play* or *trade*. In the first case *trade* has been mentioned before 'play' and in the second case 'play' has been mentioned before 'trade.' This changes in the order of the words, to my best consideration, shows the transcendent perfection of Holy Quran. Because in the first case, the subject discussed is man's greater fondness for trade and play, and scant regard for the prophet and his faith. Here it should

be noted, what is sought to be described is that, as a general rule, man gives to worldly profit and sensual pleasures preference to religion and the commandments of God. Now, the point to be considered is, that of the two things mentioned as tending to make men oblivious of religion, viz., trade and play, which one is productive of greater oblivion, literary elegance requiring that the same should come first in the order of mention. And it is clear that 'trade' is a more potent source of oblivion than sport; because in trade there is the additional incentive of profit, whereas in 'play' it is forgetfulness pure and simple without the lure of profit. There are several powerful motives which impel men's minds to trade, e.g., earning one's livelihood, maintaining one's wife and children, etc. In play there is no such compelling circumstance. Man may without any risk of harm forego his play, but he can not abandon his trade without such a risk. Trade, therefore, exercises a greater attraction for the human mind than play, and it is therefore right that in the verse under reference it should be given precedence to play. A reverse order would indeed be a defect.

Then as to the question why in the succeeding portion of the verse *للهو ومن النجاسة* (play) has been mentioned before *تجارت* (trade) and the previous order has not been adhered to, the answer is that the subject matter here described is not the same as in the first portion of the verse. On the contrary the change in the purport has necessitated a change in the order of words. Adherence to the first order should have here proved a defect. Here the purport is that the blessings which God has to give are more valuable than 'play' and 'trade.' In this case the point to be attended to in the arrangement of the words is not that, of the two things mentioned, which is the one productive of greater oblivion, but the point is that of the two things named which is the more largely surpassed in excellence by the blessings with God. If it is 'play' that is so surpassed then

it should rightly find mention before 'trade.' Now the fact is patent that trade contains an element of usefulness, even if it may not be a source of happiness in the next life, it may at least provide some means of comfort in the present life. Play, however, is of no use either in the present or in the future life. It was, therefore, necessary for the sake of literary elegance to give it first mention in the passage under reference. As an illustration we may consider the sentence. "Such and such a person can raise a maund or even two maunds." Here the words "a maund" ought to come before the words "two maunds," and it will be a mistake to say that such and such a person can raise two maunds or even one maund. Similarly in the case under reference if it were said that what was with God was better than trade, or even play the language would be faulty, because when the comparison is in the matter of superiority, then of the things with which comparisons are made the one to be first named ought to be the one which is of relatively inferior quality and then should come one which is relatively superior. If the comparison should begin with a thing of a relatively superior quality, it will then be a mere redundancy to make another comparison with a thing of inferior quality, and that portion of the sentence will be superfluous and useless. In this passage the subject matter was to express the superiority of "the blessings with God." It was therefore that play should have come first in the order of mention, because it was a thing of less worth than trade. A reverse order would mar the elegance of the language. The whole verse therefore goes to prove that in the Book of God due attention has been paid to the arrangement of words and no transposition of them is possible.

EVIDENCE OF THE HOLY QURAN, THE HADIS AND THE HOLY COMPANIONS REGARDING THE DEATH OF JESUS.

My purpose in these two illustrations is to show that it is very dangerous, in order to find one's own meaning in a

certain verse, to hold that there is in it the fault of transposition of words, and that no body has the right to make such an assumption without the authority of the Holy Quran or of any commentary by the Holy Prophet. Such a course will create a confusion, since it will enable every designing man to read his own meaning by some suitable alteration in the arrangement of words. I should have fain shown to Your Highness that in all instances of verses in which a faulty arrangement of words has been supposed, the right arrangement is that in which the words occur in the verses and it is the critics who are at fault. But space forbids. I shall therefore content myself with the two illustrations already given. The men who hold that there are instances of wrong transposition of words in the Holy Quran have been the dupe of a blunder. They have first in their own minds formulated certain rules of grammar which they want to see followed in the arrangement of words. But due to the natural weakness of the human intellect, they lost sight of many cases when they formulated the rules. If instead of proceeding to frame the rules, they had paid more attention to the Book of God and studied the arrangements observed therein they might have avoided the blunder. In the verse *انى متوفيك ورافك الى* also they have been the dupe of a similar mistake. Instead of making their opinions follow the Holy Quran, they made the Holy Quran follow their opinion. They first took it for granted that Jesus Christ was still living, and then proceeded to a consideration of the Holy Quran, and then wherever they happened to meet with a discrepancy they had to find an explanation in the theory of wrong transposition of words. But the truth is that the exaltation of Jesus Christ took place after his death, which is the same as happens to all the faithful and all the Nabis. This is the exaltation which every Muslim has been taught to seek in the prayer

اللهم اغفر لى وارحمنى واهدنى وارزقنى وارفعنى
واجبرنى

Evidence of the exaltation of the faithful is also to be found in the Hadis, reported by the Khalifa Omar

يقول الله من تواضع لي هكذا رفته هكذا

It was also upon this question of the death of all the prophets that the first consensus of the holy companions took place and the circumstances were as follows:—When the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) expired, it happened that Hazrat Omar was still possessed by the idea that he was alive and would soon make his appearance. He was so firmly fixed in this notion that he was ready to strike off the head of any one who would say to the contrary. At this time Hazrat Abu Bakar Siddique (may God be pleased with him) came along and read to the assembled companions

وما محمد الا رسول قد خلت من قبله الرسل

On hearing which, Hazrat Omar says, that his feet began to shake and he was so overcome with grief that he fell on the ground, and the Holy Companions report that they felt as if the verse had just been revealed to them for the first time, and throughout the day they walked the streets reciting the same. Now, if any of the prophets had still been living the reasoning that since all the previous Nabis had been overtaken by death there was no reason why the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) should be an exception, would have been absurd. Hazrat Omar might have objected saying that since Jesus Christ (peace on him) was still alive dwelling in the skies, why could not the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings on him) still continue to live. But the general silence of the companions is a proof of the fact that it was their unanimous opinion that Jesus Christ (peace be on him) was among the dead.

Imam Bukhari (God's mercy be on him) reports the words of Hazrat Ibn Abbas (may God be pleased with him) that مترونيك meant مميتك (cause you to die). Similarly it was also the opinion of Imam Malek (God's mercy be on him) that Jesus

was dead **مات عيسى** as can be seen in the book **مجمع** (Abjad). The silence of the other Imams would show that they also did not entertain a contrary view. The fact of the death of Jesus is thus quite clear, and the view finds support from the Holy Quran and the Hadis. One Hadis runs as follows :—

لو كان موسى وعيسى حيين لما رجعوا الا للتبا عى

The story of Jesus being still alive has found currency among the Muslims in some later age, but its acceptance would go to discredit the Holy Quran.

It need not also surprise us if the belief happened to have its birth in the words **يُنْزِلُ فِيكُمْ ابْن مَرْيَم** of the Hadis relating to the Promised Messiah. But the word **يُنْزِلُ** can never mean **يُنْزِلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ**. Neither in the Holy Quran nor in the Hadis there is anywhere any mention of coming from the sky. It is therefore wrong to read the word **يُنْزِلُ** (will be raised) into **يُنْزِلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ**. **يُنْزِلُ** merely signifies **يُبعث** and has been used in reference to the Promised Messiah to express his dignity, just as the word **خروج** (production) has been used in reference to **دجال** (anti-Christ). The word **نزول** has also been used in reference to the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) as in the verse—

قَدْ أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكُمْ ذِكْرًا - رَسُولًا يَتْلُو عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ مَبِينَاتٍ لِيُخْرِجَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ ط
وَمَنْ يُؤْمَرْ بِاللَّهِ وَعَمَلٍ صَالِحٍ يَدْخُلْ جَنَّةً تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا (بَدَأَ ط) قَدْ أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ لَهُ رِزْقًا

Similarly the word **نزول** has been used in the Holy Quran in the sense of **خلق** (creation) as in the verse—

يَبْنِي آدَمَ قَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ لُبَا سَا يَزَارِي سَوَا تَكْم وَرِيشَا
وَأَنْزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ

Thus the word **نزول** is no proof of the fact that Jesus (peace on him) is still alive and will come down from the sky, because there is here no mention of the sky in the Hadis.

THE STORY OF THE DAJJAL.

I shall now turn to disprove the other popular notion that since the Dajjal has not yet made his appearance, it is not still time for the Messiah to appear. I would say in reply that the Dajjal has already appeared, but people have failed to recognise him. The meaning of the word Dajjal is, according to Arabic lexicons a counterfeiter. Hence the word Dajjal in the prophecy refers to such societies and organisations as are engaged day and night in giving currency to counterfeit doctrines and are doing their worst to shake the foundations of Islam. The peril from this source has now attained a magnitude of which there is no parallel in the past, because they have now spread over the world in such large numbers that there is no place but the largest is there, whose endeavour it is to win people from straight to devious paths, and it is now beyond the power of the Mussulmans to counteract their peril. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be on him) said that whoever wished to be saved from the peril of the Dajjal should read the first ten and the last ten verses of Sura-i-Kahf, and in both these places there is reference to some of the false doctrines which are now being spread throughout the world at the cost of immense labour and money. The verses clearly show that even the Holy Prophet understood the Dajjal to mean such organisations whose ministers and preachers have now penetrated every part of the globe and have been inviting men to false beliefs, for otherwise as a means to save oneself from the peril of Dajjal, he would not have commanded the reading of these verses in which there is a refutation of these false doctrines.

It may now be clear to Your Highness that the Dajjal has already appeared and that by the peril of the Dajjal is meant nothing but the menace of those societies whose ministers are busy endeavouring in a thousand ways to win the world to their preposterous doctrines. That the Dajjal would be blind of one eye signifies that his spiritual eye would be blind, in other words, he would be altogether taken up by the world, and this is evident from facts. Such figurative meanings are not far fetched;

rather they are supported by the Hadis. For example we learn from the story of *Ibn Sayyad* that once the Holy Prophet went to him and Hazrat Omar asked for permission to kill him and swore that he was the Dajjal, although he was not blind of one eye, nor were the other signs to be found in him. And the Holy Prophet too (peace and blessings on him), although he forbade Omar to kill him (*Ibn Sayyad*), did not explicitly deny the fact of his being the Dajjal. From this it can be understood that both the Holy Prophet and Hazrat Omar thought it probable that the signs which had been described with regard to the Dajjal might find their fulfilment in some other sense than what they literally signified, for otherwise it was natural on the part of the Holy Prophet to ask how could Hazrat Omar call the person the Dajjal seeing that he was neither blind of one eye, nor did he possess an ass, and who was moreover a resident of Medina. But the omission of the Holy Prophet to contradict the wonder of Hazrat Omar would imply that he believed that in the question of Dajjal there was room for a figurative explanation.

There is another point worth special notice and that is that all the information that is current about the Dajjal and the Messiah is of the nature of prophecies, and all prophecies regarding the future are liable to figurative explanation. For example the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings on him) saw in a dream two golden bangles on his hand and explained it to the effect that two false claimants would appear. Now if a person were to insist that he would not accept a figurative explanation, he would be in error. Similarly, all the information that we possessed regarding the Messiah and the Dajjal was liable to figurative explanation, and the truth about them could have been clearly perceived only when they had manifested themselves in their proper time. Accordingly when things became evident, the true meaning was disclosed and now whoever gives the least thought to this subject may understand that by the Dajjal were really meant such societies as put a gloss over false beliefs and erroneous doctrines, and by their destruction is signified the exposure of their deception.

The same view is also corroborated by the Hadis يكسر الصليب (he will break the cross) that is, the Promised Messiah will refute the Christian creed with arguments and signs so that at last the cross will be broken, meaning that most people will accept Islam and Christianity will lose its influence. The other view that the Promised Messiah will go about breaking the woods of the cross is the height of impudence, being unworthy of the rank of a prophet.

MIRZA SAHIB'S CLAIM CAN NOT BE DENIED.

When the above two misconceptions have been disposed of; in other words, when the death of Jesus and the appearance of the Dajjal have been established, it will necessarily follow according to the prophecy of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) that the Promised Messiah will make his appearance from the ranks of the Mussalmans themselves. And the present is the time of his advent because the Dajjal has already appeared and other signs have been fulfilled. And since there is now only one person to make the claim, there is no way left but to accept the same, for otherwise it will give the lie to the Holy Quran and the Hadis of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessing be on him).

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE OF HIS TRUTH.

I have already mentioned, by way of specimen, some of the Quranic verses and holy traditions which go to support the claim of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as the Promised Messiah and Mahdi. It should, however, be mentioned that Almighty God did not rest content with these alone, but manifested so many other signs in support of the claimant and produced such powerful testimonies in proof of his truth, that a full description of them can not possibly be compassed in this short work. Their narration would make a voluminous book. Mention of them will be found in most of the works of the Promised Messiah, whose number extends to over 80, all of which may be produced before Your Highness if through the grace of God Your Highness should feel disposed to make

further enquiries concerning the teacher. Here, by way of earnest, I deem it proper to mention only a few among the signs manifested by God in his favour, so that Your Highness may be acquainted with a few more proofs of the truth of his claim.

A LITERARY MIRACLE.

I would first make mention of one literary miracle of the claimant similar in nature to the miracle of the Holy Quran. It is the beauty of his Arabic works which have never been equalled in their excellence, and about which he repeatedly made the announcement, that even if the learned men of Egypt, Syria and Arabia should combine to produce their like, they would never succeed in their attempt. With some of the books he even announced prizes to be paid to any one who could produce their like. But strange it is that in spite of the bitterest enmity which the *Ulemas* bore and still bear towards him, up to now no one has ventured to claim the equality of his Arabic works, and when a certain person prepared for the attempt, God removed him from the world before he could finish and publish his work, thus sealing the truth of his accredited messenger. Thanks be to God, that the members of this movement are now to be found in Egypt, Syria and Arabia, and the works of its founder have found entrance into these countries, but up to date no one has had the courage to write a book to rival any of these works. Rather on the contrary several eminent *Ulemas* of Beyrout have asked for copies of the works and have admitted their excellence. Only a few days ago one learned gentleman of Beyrout, the Superintendent of the Madrasa-i-Suria, and another gentleman asked for the Arabic works of the Promised Messiah and wrote expressing their wish to make them known to their countrymen. Similarly, two *Ulemas* of the Al-Azhar University, who read one of the works of the Promised Messiah, expressed their wonder at the same and asked for other works of the teacher for circulation among the members of the University.

It is true that instead of accepting the challenge the *Ulemas* left no stone unturned in the way of abusing the author and pronounced the verdict of heresy against him, and in the manner of the enemies of Islam endeavoured to pick out grammatical errors in his writings. But when similar examples were pointed out to them in the Holy Quran and the *Hadis*, they deigned to give no reply. And inspite of every thing that could be done to rouse them, not one of them has had the courage to produce even a small tract to rival any of the works of the claimant, and though there is now present in Hindustan a vast number of *Ulemas* and great are their literary pretensions, yet in this matter, they have obviously been denuded of all their boasted learning. Some there were, who said that the Promised Messiah had an Arab in his secret employment, who wrote the books for him, but when they were told that they too might requisition the help of all the learned men of Arabia, Egypt and Syria and combinedly meet the challenge, they failed still to meet the same. The fact is that these are the very same objections which the Arabs took to the Holy Quran, viz., that it was not a revelation, but the work of some man endowed with great eloquence who in secret tutored Muhammad (peace be on him), and this is the objection which the Christians take to the Holy Quran even to this day. If then such an objection has any value, it will apply equally to the Holy Prophet and to the Promised Messiah, and fortunate indeed is the man who in any matter may be a participant with the Holy Prophet (peace be on him). In short, the Arabic works by the Promised Messiah stand unequalled till this day and no one has had the power to produce the like of them. Thus, as it is one of the proofs of the truth of the Holy Quran that no man has the power to produce its like, even so it is one of the proofs of the truth of the Promised Messiah that men are powerless to produce the like of his Arabic writings. As regards the question why the Promised Messiah was granted the same miracle as was given to the Holy Prophet (peace be on him), the answer is that since the Promised Messiah was to

attain the perfect likeness of the Holy Prophet by reason of spiritual affinity, God bestowed upon him the same miracle as was bestowed upon his prototype. Of course, so much of difference there was between the miracles of the master and the servant, that while in case of the former the challenge was to produce three verses, in the case of the latter the challenge was to produce a section (*juz*). But neither in the case of the Holy Quran has there been any person to write three similar verses, nor now in the case of the Promised Messiah, in spite of such advancement in learning, has there been any person in Egypt, or Syria or Arabia, to produce a section to rival his works, *وذلك فضل الله يؤتيه من يشاء*, "This is a favour of God which He bestows upon whomsoever He pleases."

The above miracle increases in its wonder fulness when we remember that the Promised Messiah was an inhabitant of India, so that Arabic was not his mother-tongue. The wonder is further enhanced when we know that he did not receive his education in any eminent college or under any eminent teacher. The illimitable literary power was bestowed upon him by God in the way of a miracle.

Some people there are who take the objection that there have been many examples of men whose works have stood without a parallel. Such an objection, in the first place, would apply to the Holy Quran itself. Secondly, accepting that there are many books which have been considered to be unrivalled, still, in respect of the question in hand, such cases do not deserve our attention, because the authors of those works did never themselves claim any singularity regarding those works, whereas in the case under consideration a challenge was previously given and in spite of opposition and enmity no one has had the power to meet the challenge.

A DIVINE SIGN.

Besides the above, there was another sign, which was manifested in his favour and that is that he was given to live 25 or 26 years after publishing his revelations. God says in the Holy Quran

لو تقول علينا بعض الاقاويل لاخذنا منه باليمين ثم
لنقطعن من الاوتيين

meaning:—If this man had imputed falsehoods to Me and fabricated revelations, then I would have cut asunder the artery in his neck. Judged by this criterion we find that after the publication of his first work, the Barahin-i-Ahmadiya, he was granted a further span of 27 or 28 years of life, although in that book he set forth his revelations with all clearness and force. If he were an impostor, then it was necessary that he should have met with discomfiture by at most 23 years of time, because such was the period of life granted to the Holy Prophet (peace be on him). For, if any impostor could possibly receive such a lease of immunity, then the fact would serve to refute the argument of the Holy Quran and would create great suspicion regarding the truth of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him). Thus the fact of his having continued to live for such a length of time is in itself a powerful evidence of his truth.

But even if there were no such verse in the Holy Quran, still it would appear contrary to reason that a person should be persistently attributing falsehoods to God and misleading His creatures, and yet God would let him go unpunished. If such an enormity were possible, then all distinction between true messengers and impostors would disappear, all order would be lost and no means would be left for the discrimination of truth. God is a jealous God. We find that even earthly potentates are most displeased with such criminals as make false personation of officers of state in order to cheat and plunder the public. Such a one is never allowed to go without punishment, but is quickly apprehended. Your Highness is in

a better position than others to understand how, if a person were to assume falsely the role of authority and remain unapprehended, a laxity would overtake all the links of the administration and the entire body politic would be thrown into disorder. Thus it is against the dictates of a healthy understanding that an impostor should be granted such a long lease of immunity that after publishing his revelations he should live longer than even the Holy Prophet (peace be on him). Therefore the fact of Hazrat Mirza Sahib's living a prosperous life for such a length of time after publishing his revelations is as conclusive a proof of his truth as the verse **لَوْ تَقُولُ** is of the truth of the Holy Prophet.

A CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE OF HIS CLAIM.

After this, I wish to invite Your Highness's attention to another mighty sign which was manifested by God at the hands of the Promised Messiah. It is so clear a sign as can not fail to dissipate all doubts regarding the truth of his claim in all save those in respect of whom the decree of reprobation has been pronounced on high. The sign is that through his hands was performed the work for which he was sent by God, viz., making Islam triumphant over other faiths.

The majority of learned men are agreed that the prophecy contained in the verse:—

هو الذي ارسل رسوله بالهدى ودين الحق ليظهره على
الدين كله

(He is God, Who sent His prophet with guidance and the true religion to make it triumphant over every other faith) will be fulfilled at the time of the Promised Messiah. Thus the principal work of the Messiah was to strengthen the faith of Islam and to make it triumphant over every other faith. We have now to see whether or not this work was duly performed by the claimant. If the work was duly performed by him, then he must be the Messiah about whom the promise was given. On the other hand, if the work has

remained undischarged, then of necessity we must wait for some other Messiah. In case it is established that through his instrumentality God has given Islam victory over other faiths, then it will be the duty of every fair minded enquirer to accept the truth and to attach himself to the standard of the Promised Messiah.

Before I enter upon an elaborate discussion on the point, I deem it necessary to state that prophets and other accredited messengers of God merely plant a seed which sprouts and increases after their departure, gradually throwing out branches on all sides and gathering strength in its roots. For example, when Jesus of Nazareth lived on the earth, there were only a few of his people who believed in him; the rest wholly rejected his claims. But, nevertheless, it could not be said that his mission was a failure, because he left behind certain basic principles with the help of which his followers came out victorious against every opponent. In the same way the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) came with a mission for the whole world, but at the time of his departure the whole world was not even aware of the news of his coming. What he did, however, was to plant the seed of Islam in such a rich soil that before a century had elapsed it multiplied so largely that it covered almost the whole of the then known world. Thus it is by no means necessary for a Divine messenger to see the whole work completed during his life-time. He merely shows the way and the work goes on developing after he has left.

The above point being cleared, I next proceed to mention an example to show how Almighty God vouchsafed to the Promised Messiah the power to establish the superiority of Islam over other creeds. There was some time ago a very important conference held at Lahore, the capital of the Punjab, in which the followers of different religions were invited to describe the excellences of their respective faiths. Accordingly, the representatives of the different creeds assembled at the conference and each endeavoured to establish the superiority

of his own faith. Many people of wealth and influence took part in the conference and the eyes of the country were expectantly fixed to see the upshot. On this occasion, among the many papers sent by different people on behalf of Islam, there was one sent by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. He not only sent the paper, but at the same time announced by means of a public notice that his paper would come out best at the conference. Your Highness may realise how delicate a matter it was while one's paper was to be read at a conference of one's opponents, to announce beforehand that the same should carry the palm. But who could frustrate the decree of God? The paper was read, and as the time allotted was short, the reading could not be finished. However, the effect upon the audience was such that they declared that they would either hear the paper through or leave the conference. At last the managers of the conference who included the leading members of the aristocracy and the Government Officials decided to grant additional time for the finishing of the paper, and when the same was finished, friends and foes unanimously declared that the paper had proved superior to all others, and the promoters of the conference apprehending that such opportunities might lead to a propagation of Islam discontinued holding such conferences in the future. An English translation of the essay has been published and the same has made the editors of many English newspapers express their wonder at the novel way of presenting Islam. One paper went so far as to declare that within the last thirteen centuries no book so powerful had been written in defence of Islam. These people unfortunately are not aware that in the defence of Islam this personage has written many other books of surpassing excellence, whose arguments no opponent can ever venture to controvert. These books have not yet come to their notice. In short, this was a rare piece of miracle, in which even the opponents of Islam had to play a part, and even the adversaries had to admit that the superiority of Islam over other faiths had been amply demonstrated. This was verily the work for which the

Promised Messiah was to make his appearance. Now then, when the appointed time has arrived and the signs have been fulfilled, and the need is crying and the claimant has appeared, who has also performed the work which was destined for the Promised Messiah, what further doubt can then be left regarding his truth ?

WHY THE REFORMER WAS CALLED MESSIAH?

The chief reason why the reformer of this age was given the title of Messiah was that he was destined to fight against Church Christianity and to break its power, and as an actual fact the instruments which the reformer used towards this end were such as were altogether beyond the power of the Christians to face. For example, it was the practice of the Christians to take in the Mussalmans by such arguments as the following :—" Mark, how our Messiah is still alive while your prophet is dead." " Our Messiah used to bring the dead to life, your prophet did not bring any dead to life." " Our Messiah is sitting in the sky, your prophet lies buried under the sand." " Your prophet will not visit the earth again, but our Messiah will once more come to the earth to purge it of its corruptions, and it is he who will overthrow the perils of the latter days." " Now, say truly, which of the two is superior ?" The argument was such as could not possibly be escaped by the Mussalmans, and most of them fell a prey to the deception. What the reformer did was to establish by powerful arguments the falsity of all such notions. He thus saved the Mussalmans from the clutches of the Christians. And the situation now is that wherever a Christian Missionary hears that an Ahmadi is present to meet him, he never ventures to enter upon a discussion and soon makes himself scarce from the place. And only a few years ago the Rev. Cr. Lefroy, the Lord Bishop of the Punjab, issued a circular forbidding the Missionaries to hold discussions with the Ahmadees, because such discussions always resulted in the discomfiture of the Christians. By proving that Jesus died a natural

death, the new reformer gave a fresh lease of life to Islam, and now the Mussalmans are for all times saved from falling a prey to the Christian missionaries.

I grant that the belief in the natural death of Jesus had always existed among a small section of the Mussalmans, and that among the early Muslims, that was the view that had general acceptance. Nevertheless, no one before the present reformer ever made use of this weapon in the defence of Islam, and this was a special part that remained to be performed by the Promised Messiah.

AHMAD'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST CHRISTIANITY.

Nor did the new reformer rest content with merely telling the Christians that Islam did not subscribe to the belief in the bodily ascension of Jesus. God had another mighty work to perform at his hands, and that was that he established by proofs derived from the New Testament and from history that Jesus did actually survive the crucifixion and travel down to Cashmere. From the history of Cashmere he proved that there was in that country a tomb about which it was said that it belonged to a prophet whose name was Isa Messih, and who visited the country six hundred years before the Holy Prophet (peace be on him). The story derives support from the evidence of medical works where mention is found of a certain ointment well-known as the ointment of the apostles or the ointment of Jesus, and about which it is narrated that it was prepared by the apostles for application to the wounds of Jesus, and as regards the latter history mentions no other wounds save those received upon the cross.

At this point, I consider it necessary to mention that the opinion that Jesus was put upon the cross, but escaped alive is not contrary to the verse **مَا صَلَّبَ** of the Holy Quran, because the word **صلب** does not mean "to put upon the cross," but means "to kill a person by crucifixion," as may be seen from any well-known Arabic lexicon as "Lisan-ul-Arab," &c.

In short, the fact of Jesus's visit to Cashmere was proved by the Promised Messiah by evidence derived from the New Testament, the Jewish history and the history of Cashmere, and also by the discovery of his tomb. He thus destroyed the very foundation of Christianity and the more the Christians will come to know the facts, the more will they be estranged from their faith and betake themselves to Islam. And actually ever since the Promised Messiah published this discovery, European travellers in large numbers have been visiting Cashmere in order to see the tomb, and although up to now the facts have not received sufficient publicity in Europe, still a commotion has already been started. Only a few days ago a person wrote from Germany requesting to be supplied with several thousand copies of the thesis, because, said he, such people in that country as had seen the same, had been taken by surprise and had been convinced of its truth.

The fact is that the Christians are not in a position to deny the truth of the story, because on the one hand, in the New Testament, the words of Jesus are still extant which say that he came to gather the lost lambs of the house of Israel, and on the other hand, we have the conclusive testimony of the Bible that in the days of the Jewish downfall, Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, carried them away into captivity and later on, when through the help of the kings of Media and Persia, the Jews regained their freedom, only two out of the twelve of their tribes returned to their country. The remaining ten tribes settled in Afghanistan and Cashmere. One proof of the fact that the inhabitants of these countries came originally from Syria is to be found in the names of many villages in these countries which are similar to the names of villages in Syria. Even the name of the country—Chashmere—furnishes an evidence pointing the same direction. The people of the country call themselves Casheris and not Cashmiris, which shows that the correct name of the country is not Cashmir but Cashir, which in Hebrew would mean "Like Shir," Shir being the same as Sir or Syria, meaning the

land of flowers. Since Cashmere like Syria was a land of flowers, the Jews in memory of their original home appear to have given to the new country of their adoption the name of Casir (or Like-Sir) which was gradually corrupted into Cashir and Cashmere. In short, the Promised Messiah proved the fact of the natural death of Jesus by the most convincing arguments and even pointed out the whereabouts of his tomb, after which there remained not a single proof for the support of the Christian faith. Because once the death of Jesus is established, his atonement and sonship at once fall to the ground. Similarly, in many other ways the Promised Messiah pointed out the hollowness of the Christian faith and collected such a mass of materials as removed all difficulties on the part of the Muslims to get the better of the Christians, provided that the Muslims abandoned their stiffness and obstinacy and joined the standard of the accredited messenger of God. May God soon bring that day, so that Islam may reappear in the world in its original splendour. The method which the Promised Messiah has laid down for discussions with the Christians is so powerful and effective that no Christian can ever face the same and the fact has been made known to the whole world by the Christian Missionaries themselves. One of my friends, Sheikh Abdur Rahman Moulvi Fazil, whom I had sent to Egypt for missionary purposes and also in order to complete his education in Arabic, reported that a certain Arab once came to him and said that the Christian Missionaries gave him a good deal of trouble. He therefore wanted to be told some argument with which he might easily defeat the Christians. My friend gave him the following argument: that there was no evidence forthcoming from the New Testament which proved that Jesus died upon the cross, rather that the New Testament went to prove that Jesus came down from the cross alive. My friend made him get by heart all the necessary references. The Arab then went to a leading missionary and said that while the Christians believed that Jesus died upon the cross and thus atoned for their sins, the fact was that Jesus came down alive from the

cross. The missionary said that such a view was incorrect and demanded its proof from the New Testament. When the Arab quoted the necessary references, the gentleman all of a sudden exclaimed, "Oh! this is got from Qadian. This is got from Qadian." The Arab said that it did not matter whence it was got, he ought to give his reply, but the gentleman refused to carry on the conversation any further.

DEMONSTRATION OF THE SUPERIORITY OF ISLAM BY DIVINE SIGNS.

Besides the above, another means by which the Promised Messiah demonstrated his victory over other false religions was that he declared most forcibly that in this age he had been raised by God to bring about a triumph of Islam. To that end he announced that true religion was one which was always attended by Divine signs and which could at all times produce evidence of its Divine connection. He claimed that it was Islam alone which possessed the quality of showing at all times ever new signs, and whoever doubted its truth could come and meet him, and he was prepared to substantiate his claim by showing him some new signs, and that if there were any other person claiming the truth for any other religion, then he too ought to appear in the field against the claimant and show some sign to prove the truth of his creed, a sign which ought to be so powerful as could not possibly be attributed to human skill. For himself he announced with all force :

"Though miracle is grown a thing without substance or name,

It may still be seen among the servants of Muhammad
(peace be on him)."

But in spite of repeated challenges to the partisans of other creeds, none of them had the power to produce evidence of the living force of their faiths by taking up the gauntlet thrown down by the new teacher. Thus was the triumph of Islam made manifest over all other creeds. I have already discussed at length the point that true religion must be that

of which the supporting evidence is not confined merely to stories, but which is always attended by ever fresh signs. This was the test to which the Promised Messiah invited his opponents, and there was no religion which could come out victorious under this test save Islam. Thus was the promise of God fulfilled in the person of the Promised Messiah :—

هو الذي ارسل رسوله بالهدى ودين الحق ليظهره
على الدين كله

(He is God, Who sent His prophet with guidance and the true religion to make it triumphant over every other faith).

THE FOUNDER OF SIKHISM WAS A MUSLIM.

There is a community in the Punjab known by the name of Shikhs. A considerable number of them is employed in the British army. They are specially noted for their bravery. To this community the Promised Messiah demonstrated the truth of his cause in a special way. He proved from their own books that Baba Nanak, the founder of the community, was a Mussalman. This community had at his time all but completely merged themselves among the Hindus and had adopted their customs. As a result of the facts disclosed by the Promised Messiah, this tendency was immediately arrested, and now many pious members of the community are showing a leaning towards Islam. Several of them have already embraced the faith, and it may well be hoped that within a short time a considerable number of them will be converted to Islam.

WHY THEN REJECT THE MESSIAH?

In short, the Promised Messiah demonstrated the superiority of Islam over other creeds, both collectively and individually, in so convincing a way that now none of them can venture to conflict with Islam, and the victory of Islam over other faiths has been achieved in the true sense of the word. And through the grace of God we may now hope soon to see a return of that day when the promise contained in the verse *يدخلون*

جا will be fulfilled for a second time. Now the question arises : when a person sets up a claim to be the Promised Messiah and instead of being visited by Divine wrath, does actually perform the work for which the advent of the Messiah was foretold, is there still in reason left any ground for rejecting his claim ? Further, when the promise of God has already been fulfilled, is it still justified to shut one's eyes to facts—facts which would redound to the glory of Islam—and to say that not now but in some future time will come the hour when the promise will be fulfilled ? When at the hands of the claimant have been fulfilled the duties destined for the Promised Messiah, then it does necessarily follow that he is the Promised Messiah.

HIS WORK OF INTERNAL REFORM.

All the works mentioned above concerned the defence of Islam from outside foes. I shall now proceed to notice the internal reform effected by the Promised Messiah. I do not, however, wish to enter into details, because were I to enumerate all those errors which had found their way into the different sections of the Mussalmans and the reform effected in them, this epistle would attain to too great a length. Briefly, I may say, that he made the Muslims aware of the true object and purpose of the Holy Quran, and agreeably to the eternal law of God, against the hardest opposition and the foulest aspersions from the Ulemas, he came out victorious through God's grace, and founded a community which at this time counts a very large following. In every corner of the Punjab and Hindustan there are now to be found men, who have accepted his message. Beyond the limits of Hindustan the movement has spread its influence in Arabia, Syria, China, Egypt, Africa and even in England. It has now begun to attract the notice of the people of foreign countries ; and although it must be admitted that the impression made in foreign countries is small, still this is due only to the fact that it was very recently that the missionary work in those countries was commenced. It

is, moreover, a Divine law that in the beginning all religions spread very slowly. Smallness of the number of followers therefore, ought not to make one doubtful of the truth of any movement. What is to be seen is whether the movement is gaining or losing in numbers. A similar objection was taken against Islam by the infidels of Arabia, to which God gave the following reply :—

اَفَلَا يَرَوْنَ اَنَّا نَأْتِي (اَلَا رَضِىْنَا قَدَمَهُمَا) مِنْ طَارِفِهَا اَفْهَمَ الْاَلْبَوْنَ
 meaning :—Do they not see that We have been daily shortening the land from near its borders? Will they, in spite of this fact, still believe that it is they who will come out victorious? In other words, when every day they saw Islam growing and themselves dwindling in numbers, then how could they believe that it was they who would come out victorious. The case of the movement founded by the Promised Messiah is governed by the same law. It is daily growing in strength. It began with only one man and already it has its followers in every land. This progress is itself a proof that very soon at the hands of this community Islam will triumph over all other religions of the world

THE AHMADEES.

Thus the work of internal reform achieved by the Promised Messiah consisted in founding a community which is a model of piety and purity. Even our enemies will bear testimony to the fact that as soon as a man turns an Ahmadi, the tenour of his life undergoes a change and a reformation is wrought within him, such that if a comparison be made between his past life and his new life, a difference can be seen like that of the Nadir from the Zenith. There are thousands who have increased in sincerity to an extent as to become the counterparts of the Holy Companions and who think it nothing to sacrifice their life, their property, their homes, their friends and their relations for the sake of their faith. In the eyes of the worldly men they pass as poor and weak, but in the sight of God they possess such a dignity that no one who persecutes them can ever meet with happiness, and those who oppress

them are sure to meet with disgrace and discomfiture. It may be possible and is natural that some small section of the community should still be weak, not having succeeded in deriving full benefit from the teachings of the Promised Messiah. But such weakness can not be an argument against the truth of the movement, because in all communities there are sure to be found some members, who are more backward than others, even the Holy Companions being no exception to the rule, among whom even till the last days of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) there continued to exist a part of hypocrites. With the exception, therefore, of such a small section the community at large are the objects of the special favour of God.

Your Highness may realise that a people who see everyday fresh signs of God and witness such manifestations of Divine power as to make them feel the actual presence of the Almighty, how strongly grounded must be their faith, and how rapid must be their progress in sincerity. A thief never ventures to commit a theft in the presence of a policeman. How then can they who have known the Almighty power of God and seen it working before their eyes, venture to approach a sin? How can they continue to bear in their hearts a greed or longing for the world? Their hearts will be washed of all impurities and they will be as clean as one freshly come out from the bath. Thanks, then, be to God that the result of the prayers and labours of the Promised Messiah is daily manifesting itself in the shape of ever increasing success.

ONE AHMADI—A MARTYR.

I will here relate briefly the story of one of the members of this community which will show to Your Highness how God has strengthened the hearts of the sincere members of this community. Moulvi Syed Abdul Latif was one of the leading men of Afghanistan. He was held in such high respect that at the coronation of His Majesty the Amir Habibullah Khan, it was

he who was selected to perform the function. He heard about the Promised Messiah and came down to Qadian to see him. When he returned to Kabul, he was met by a powerful opposition. The Amir was obliged through the outcry of the Ulemas to place him under confinement. He challenged all the Ulemas to meet him in a discussion regarding the claims of the Promised Messiah, but nobody ventured to accept the challenge. At last all the Ulemas pronounced against him the *fatwa* that he should be stoned to death. More than once the Amir urged him to renounce, at least outwardly, his opinion but he remained steadfast. Again, at the time of the execution the Amir repeated the request, but he only replied, "To-day is the day of my 'Id. What way it is you would have me go? It is the covenant of God that I am to-day going to fulfill." When all means failed to persuade him to renounce the truth, then they cruelly stoned him to death. But even under the storm of stones he showed not the least sign of perturbation.

The above event will show to Your Highness the nature of the faith the Promised Messiah has implanted in the minds of his followers, and that not in the hearts of unlettered men who sometimes venture upon such deeds through sheer foolhardiness but in the minds of learned men, like Moulvi Syed Abdul Latif, who are wont to accept opinions only after thorough deliberation and research.

LOYALTY TO GOVERNMENT A FUNDAMENTAL ARTICLE OF HIS TEACHINGS.

Besides the general reforms, I wish to mention here one special feature of the work of the Promised Messiah and that is the inclusion into the articles of his discipleship the condition of loyalty to the governing power. He has in almost all his works enjoined upon his followers to observe the strictest fealty towards the government under which they may chance to live. He goes so far as to say that whoever is not faithful to his ruler, or conspires against the authorities or

obstructs the performance of their commands, is not of his followers. This was such a useful piece of reform as might be said to have put the whole world under an obligation, because it brought peace where before prevailed daily disturbances and quarrels and many an act of rebellion. And not in words of mouth alone, but practically, the lesson has been so well impressed upon the community that on every occasion the Ahmadis have given practical evidence of their loyalty to the British Government, and have not for once participated in any agitation, however slight, against the government. Nor is this injunction exclusively meant for the British Government, rather under whichever government the Ahmadis may live, they are enjoined to render it perfect obedience and co-operation, and should any Ahmadi transgress the command, he will, according to the clear order of the Promised Messiah, cease to deserve the name.

CONCLUSION—GRAVITY OF THE CLAIM—NEED FOR ATTENTION.

I am now going to close this letter and hope that Your Highness will be pleased to reflect on the points raised in the same. If Your Highness wishes it, I might send to Your Highness such books as would throw further light on the claims of the Promised Messiah. A more useful way it might be, if Your Highness desire it, that I should send to Your Highness some *Ulemas* who might attend upon Your Highness for a fortnight or three weeks, and Your Highness might have discussions with them upon all questions of importance.

Since the claim of being the Promised Messiah is a question of grave moment, and it is incumbent upon every one professing to be a Mussalman to ponder upon the same, I trust Your Highness will give the matter the fullest consideration. Moreover, Your Highness may remember that any action on Your Highness's part has not its effect confined to Your Highness alone, but that it will always be imitated by a considerable

section of Your Highness's subjects. Thus the acceptance of a truth by Your Highness will not be the acceptance of a truth by one single individual, but very likely it will prove to be the means of the guidance of thousands, and all their rewards will be set down to Your Highness's credit. On the other hand, a rejection by Your Highness will not be a rejection by Your Highness alone, but will be the cause of keeping back thousands for which Your Highness will be answerable before God ; because before that King of kings, princes and peasants are alike liable to render accounts. I have now discharged the duty that was laid on me in the command to submit to Your Highness the particulars relating to this movement. It now remains for Your Highness to choose whether to accept or to reject this rare blessing of following the vicegerent of the seal of prophets, a blessing which exceeds in value the sovereignty of the whole world.

THIS IS A BLESSED AGE AND SHOULD BE VALUED.

It is one of the favours of Almighty God that He has created us in this blessed time. Millions of men, of great piety and learning and wealth, have left the world longing in vain to see the time of the Promised Messiah. Though the Promised Messiah is now departed, yet those who saw him are still among the living. Blessed therefore is the time. Another time will come when powerful kings will enter the following of this Messenger of God. But fortunate are they who are the first to receive this blessing. For another age will come when men will wish to give up kingdoms if so they might get the dignity of those who lived near the time of the Promised Messiah.

A PRAYER TO GOD.

Last of all, I pray to God that he may open Your Highness's heart, and grant Your Highness the opportunity to think over my words, because without His favour nothing can come to pass. I address this epistle to Your Highness under a command and it is my belief that the command was not given

to me in vain, that sooner or later this epistle of mine will be productive of some momentous result which will bring about a mighty change in the destiny of the land, because God's words never go in vain. May He grant that in the blessings which are soon to come, Your Highness may have a considerable share. Peace be on Your Highness.

Yours truly,

MIRZA MAHMOOD AHMAD,

Second Successor of the Promised Messiah,

Qadian, Punjab.